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Authority claims in early Greek cosmologies a study on Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles

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KING'S COLLEGE LONDON
PhD in CLASSICS

Authority claims in early Greek cosmologies: a study on Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles

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Supervised by:
Prof. Michael Trapp
Dr. Hugh Bowden

June 2013

AUTHORITY CLAIMS IN EARLY GREEK COSMOLOGIES:
A STUDY ON XENOPHANES, HERACLITUS, PARMENIDES, AND EMPEDOCLES

ΤΙΜΗΣ ΕΝΕΚΕΝ:
ΦΙΛΗΙ ΜΗΤΡΙ ΤΕ ΦΙΛΩΙ ΠΑΤΡΙ

Description of thesis:

The aim of this thesis is to examine the nature of the expertise which the first Greek cosmologists pursued, and the way in which they introduced a new area of knowledge. It is also investigates the way in which these early thinkers expressed their personal views, and the way in which they attempted to claim public attention in order to establish themselves as experts in society. The knowledge which they wished to divulge in the community is quite distinct from the knowledge which was disclosed by other prestigious individuals, such as the epic poets or the seers. However, there are significant respects in which the authority claims of the first cosmologists resemble the authority claims of these individuals. This thesis proposes an interpretation of these similarities in light of the oral nature of archaic communication, which the discussions of these texts often neglect. The need to persuade a live audience had a considerable impact on the way in which the first cosmologists presented themselves to their audience, since they could use traditional material differently in order to reach out for a larger audience. Tradition was thus appropriated to new ends and to a new way of self-projection. At the same time, however, the content of the knowledge which the individual disclosed did not exactly fit to traditional standards. This thesis examines the relation of the Presocratics with tradition and the respects in which they differ and attempt to mark a new area of expert knowledge. This in turn helps us re-evaluate the authority claims of the Presocratics and to interpret them in connection with the circumstances under which these texts were published rather than in connection with our modern expectations about what qualifies for theoretical investigation.

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Chapter I: Introduction

1. The context for Presocratic authority claims

This analysis promises to examine the authoritative perspective of the most prominent cases of early cosmologists. Before turning to the major question of this examination, it is important to define first the particular sense with which "authoritative" occurs in this study. Authority is here used in connection with that particular occasion of presenting oneself and one's work in front of a live audience. It is in this respect that this term aspires to refer to the specific way in which an individual wishes to present himself to his audience as someone who is worth listening to, but also as someone who has managed to acquire advanced knowledge. In addition, the term "authoritative" pertains not only to the person, who presents his personal point of view about a specific topic, but also to the peculiar nature and implications of his truth, such as its content, thought, and language. It may be noted from the outset that authority claims and the wish to establish oneself as a competent individual in the archaic epoch were generally raised within a traditional and social context.

In order to understand and define the particular quality and key features of the type of authority asserted by the Presocratics, and what is telling, and potentially distinctive, about the way in which they make their authority claims, it is essential to explore firstly the special types of authority which were current in their society. This is important because, when new forms of authorities appeared in 5th century Greece, the audience expected to find in their presentation a kind of self-projection, which would evoke in their minds familiar modes of expressing authority. In archaic presentation, that is, the act of defining oneself in relation with existing tradition was to a

considerable extent a common way of claiming personal authority in public. It should be pointed out however that our examination of background authorities does not aim in directing the attention of the reader towards a black-or-white understanding of archaic authority. Epic poetry and the art of divination are picked out as examples of archaic authority, because they represent the most prestigious and popular cases of authority in Greek society. At any event, this contrast fails, when considered alone, to accommodate a substantial interpretation of the authoritative perspective of the first cosmologists.

At the same time however, it is vital to distinguish Presocratic authority claims from those made by other authorities, mainly because modern scholarship has occasionally treated apparent similarities between the two as evidence for an identical authoritative status. For example, Xenophanes has been sometimes understood as a rhapsode, Parmenides as a shamanistic figure, whereas Empedocles as some kind of a mystical icon. In other words, it is impossible to interpret the various ways in which the Presocratics under examination attempt to differentiate, and eventually establish, their cosmological enterprise from other areas of expertise, unless we have firstly examined the particular and crucial features of other types of expert knowledge.

The examination of other cases of archaic authority thus helps us throw some light upon the standard expectations which the audience of the first cosmologists had, when they listened to new kind of *logos* which laid a claim to a privileged status. It also helps us clarify the way in which novel ideas were received by their public, and interpret the authority claims of the Presocratics from a new, and perhaps more suitable, angle. If we chose to follow this line of reasoning, it is then possible to view the authority claims of Presocratic *logoi* in connection with the element of audience familiarity, which plays a central role in the construction of an authoritative identity in oral

cultures. The oral circulation of ideas in archaic Greece required from authoritative individuals to interact with a previously formed tradition. In the oral presentation of ideas, that is to say, multiple forces of tradition were at play. It is therefore vital to adopt this point of departure in this analysis, because it is fruitful, when it comes to understanding the particular function of some apparently problematic features of the early cosmological accounts under examination, which cannot be otherwise explained.

The reader will also detect the absence of Greek lyric from the discussion of early expressions of individual authority. Lyric poetry is deliberately excluded from this analysis, whereas epic poetry is here used as a point of reference, because it is this domain of poetic activity in particular which is more frequently acknowledged in the surviving Presocratic fragments.[1] It is also with this kind of traditional authority that Presocratic thinkers bear the most striking and significant resemblance in terms of the intellectual role which they were at pains to undertake in society. In addition, Presocratic cosmologies do not generally give the impression that they were formulated as a response to the tradition of lyric but of epic poetry.[2] The question of understanding the significant implications of epic authority is thus important for this examination, because this authoritative activity set the standards for later authoritative claims.

[1] Although there is a single mention of Archilochus in Heraclitus (B42), according to whom he should be dismissed together with Homer from the poetic contests. Nonetheless, the point made here is that the Presocratics under examination do not launch a systematic attack against lyric poets.

[2] Except in the exclusive case of Xenophanes, for which see analysis in relevant chapter.

i) Epic poetry

The first example of an authoritative posture was preserved in the oral poetry of Homer and Hesiod, from whom we acquire important information about the way in which the question of authority was firstly raised. Although epic poetry acknowledges various types of social authority,[3] the authority of the poet in particular is the only case for which the information is moderately more extensive. Epic poetry defined its authoritative truth as a form of knowledge, which can be generally described as the narration of past heroic deeds as well as the explanation of the world in terms of human and divine interaction.[4]

It then appears that the authoritative task of the epic poet was related from the earliest beginnings with a kind of truth, which was believed to transcend everyday life, since it dealt with matters unattainable by the common lot. The reliability of this truth, however, was endorsed by the traditional and religious belief that the gods are prone to communicate, in fact intimate, their high-status knowledge to privileged individuals of their choice, and through them to human society.[5] The Muses were, because of

[3] In the Homeric poems we find figures of *σοφοί*, like Nestor, army leaders, valiant warriors, and honourable aristocrats, but also other forensic types of authority (i.e. the *δημιοεργοί*) such as that of crafters, whose art and expertise are important because they attend to society's everyday needs.

[4] For the view that the truth presented in epic poetry aims in the reconstruction of past events and in the presentation of the *κλέα ἀνδρῶν*, see Detienne (1994, p. 66), Thalmann (1984, pp. 124 and 132), Murray (1981, esp. p. 91), and Humphreys (1983, p. 214). Cf. also Demodocus' song in θ 489 and θ 498 ff. For that the truth presented in epic poetry combines the narration of past events with a description of the nature of the divine, see *Th.* 33 and 100-5.

[5] The contact of the epic poet with the divine is revealed from that he is commonly referred to as *θεῖος*, but also from that epic poetry defines poetic craft as a gift which divine grace bestows (cf. θ 43, 64, 498 and 539; *Th.* 93-4 and 103-105; Arch. fr. 1; and Pind. *Ol*. 7.7). The Muses were believed to both dispense and deprive an individual from the ability to sing, as in the case of Thamyris (B 594-9). For the common belief that gods could hear and respond to human requests, see E 121; Sol. fr. 13; Sapph. fr.

their divine status, omniscient, and for this reason they could inspire the poet with the transcendental vision which his task required. This is expressed in the motif of poetic invocation, which occurs at critical and important parts of the poem.[6] In addition, the motif of divine inspiration also meant to remind to the audience that the account which they were about to hear was partly the product of a divine revelation and hence particularly important.

Epic poetry repeatedly associates the activity of singing with an authorised setting of performance, such as the banquet. This poetry, furthermore, claims that song corresponds to specific social purposes.[7] The social prominence of the early poetic *logos* had two aspects: it aimed in entertaining *and* in teaching the audience. Examples of poetic performance in Homer suggest that this poetry was sung and that it was subject to pre-defined standards in terms of both language and content.[8] This is also suggested by the fact that epic poetry often describes an authoritative performance with the expressions *κατὰ κόσμον* or *κατὰ μοῖραν*.[9] These

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1; Alcm. fr. 5; Arch. fr. 108, and Pind. *Paean.* 6.68. For the archaic notion that the poet receives his information from the Muses, see Λ 218, Ξ 508, Π 112, and B 761.

[6] See, e.g. B 284-93. Cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 6. The omniscience of the Muses was traditionally attributed to their omnipresence, for which reason they were also believed to witness everything. They were also credited with the ability to speak eloquently, which seems to imply the epic view that skilful utterance was one of the many aspects of poetic authority. Hesiod, for example, describes them as *ἀρτιεπεῖαι* (*Th.* 29).

[7] This is revealed in the inclusion of the bard in the *δημιοεργοί* list (ϱ 382-5), but also from that this poetry was performed in the centre (*ἐς μέσον*) of the gathering (cf. θ 262). For the eminent position of the poet, see, e.g. θ 471-2 and ν 27-8.

[8] However, this does not also imply that oral epic poetry appeared in a fully organised and conscious fashion of this kind of authority as such. The point here is rather that it was the first kind of a socially important activity, whose rule of composition gradually formulated a traditional pattern of presentation and of self-presentation.

[9] For these expressions, see θ 488; B 213; I *236 κοσμήτορε λαῶν*; K 472; Λ 48; *ἵππους εὖ κατὰ κόσμον ἐρύκεμεν*. The basic sense of *κατὰ κόσμον* in the Iliad is that of an ordered whole, e.g. the formation of the army in battle array (cf., Λ 48; M 85). Cf. also, the example of Thersytes' bad speech in the Iliad (B 211-6). He is thus characterised as *ἀμετροεπής* and for this reason his words are described as *ἔπεα ἄκοσμα*, which is to say that his words lack measure.

authoritative expressions bear a two-fold meaning: on the one hand they imply the arrangement of the traditional material and formulaic language in a manner that is suitable for oral communication, and on the other they suggest the notion of what is morally fitting and therefore potentially educational. They also illustrate the implications of poetic expertise (*σοφία*), since their skilful application calls for a remarkable capacity for remembering in live performance the stock of the epic formulae, which oral tradition made available to the individual poet.[10]

In terms of the performance itself, the limitations inherent in the compositional technique of the epos required a particular kind of verbal expression, which made apt use of tradition, and which in this way encouraged the perpetuation of tradition. This in turn implies that in this mode of communication and of authoritative self-presentation the verbal form, and consequently the general thought thereby expressed, of the published information was to a considerable extent constrained by rigidly set standards, which could not be easily overlooked by the epic poet in his composition. At the same time however, he was relatively free to enrich in his performance the way in which traditional material was presented or to refine the oral formulae by submitting with his performance possible variations or new formulae.[11]

Consequently, in terms of the way in which epic poetry was experienced by its audience, they expected, in fact demanded, to listen in this

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[10] In Murray's view the poetic processes of performance and of composition are simultaneous (1981, p. 95). See also, Lord (1960, p. 13). The "steady flow of words" is thus a vital element of the poet's linguistic task and formed a part of his expertise. This becomes apparent from the poetic metaphors which simulate the flow of speech to the flow of a river. Cf., *Th.*, 39 (*ἀκάματος ῥέει αὐδή*), and 97; and A 249. It is much later with Pindar however that the poet appears to be self-conscious about his craftsmanship, for he explicitly tells us that he will find a way to articulate the things he wants to say (Cf. e.g., *Ol.* 3. 4-6: *εὑρόντι τρόπον*).

[11] For a discussion of variation in performance, see discussion below.

kind of performance a familiar and moderately standard set of words and ideas but also of stories. The authoritativeness thus of individual composition and performance was decided according to how skilfully the individual poet treated existed tradition. This in turn implies that the authoritative task of epic poetry was confound not only by the themes and expression permitted but also by the standard expectations, even perhaps disposition, of the audience.

Although scholars do not commonly agree to what extent personal creativity was an active option for epic poets, it seems generally safe to assume that at least to some extent it was. The authoritative image, which the epos affirms, presents us with a paradox; it is of a personal and at the same of an a-personal nature. It was a-personal insofar as the poetic truth was believed to derive from a divine source, and it was personal insofar as the extensive variety of the formulaic stock offered the opportunity for variation and constant change within a relatively stable tradition.

This paradox can be however explained when viewed in light of the oral status of this poetry, which hampers the appearance of permanent and fixed versions of a song. The epic poetry of the archaic age was delivered orally and it was not, at least at its early stage, preserved with writing. For this reason, poetic performances varied according to the taste and craft of each individual performer. What this means is that the audience was inclined to accept alternative takes on the same theme provided, of course, that the composition generally conformed to the traditional rules of the epos. This eventually encouraged a spirit of individual competition and, more importantly, of inner-differentiation, within the domain of this kind of poetic activity. In the *Homeric hymn* to Apollo, for example, the poet advertises himself *against* other poets, thus acknowledging a more general situation according to which individual authorities with the same type of social

influence and recognition attempt to differentiate themselves from one another.[12]

In addition, Hesiod in the opening of his *Opera* advises Perses to always distinguish good (i.e. constructive) from bad (i.e. unproductive) *Ἔρις*. Hesiod then goes on to describe the nature of *Ἔρις* by adding that one rhapsode hates the other in the same way in which a potter or a builder "hates" an individual, who practises the same craft. In his view, this kind of human behaviour is nonetheless an example of good *Ἔρις*, since for Hesiod competition in general is not considered ignoble or barren, when it is directed towards a good cause.[13] Hesiod thus illustrates a complex social phenomenon of competition, which eventually results in positive progress. According to him, the authoritative activity of poetry can advance exactly because individual poets are at liberty to compete against one another in contests.[14]

The commonness of the spirit of poetic competition is also confirmed by the fact that the Greeks were particularly keen on attending poetic contests, which took place on mainly religious occasions such as public festivals. In fact, Hesiod himself accounts for his personal victory in such a contest in memory of Amphidamas.[15] It then becomes apparent that already

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[12] Cf. *Hymn. hom.*, In Apoll., 161 ff., which includes a direct address to the audience. It also worthy of note that the singer of this hymn links his authority with his ability to contrive verses which can please the audience. For an examination of Greek poetic contests, see Herrington (1985, pp. 5-6).

[13] Cf. *Op.* 24-6. Note also that according to Hesiod such competition is not only productive but it is also acceptable on moral grounds (*ἀγαθὴ Ἔρις*).

[14] It also seems likely that Hesiod understood his poetry in connection with this belief. This becomes apparent especially when considering the distinctively different kind of *epos* he composes for his Homer-accustomed audience.

[15] Cf. *Op.* 654-662. Although Hesiod simply says that he won the prize of a tripod with his *ὕμνος*, the phrasing he uses points at his *Theogony*. It is also worthy of note that he appears to be particularly concerned with mentioning his victory, since it is apparently irrelevant to what he previously advises Perses. He is also emphatic in the way he introduces his victory (*μέ φημι*). The *Theogony* is implied especially in lines 658-9.

in the epic the tradition inner-differentiation was an acceptable way of establishing personal authority.

The custom of performing poetry in public has one further implication for our point of analysis. J. Herrington points out that archaic poetry was not a collection of written texts but an ensemble of various live performances of the same poem.[16] Quite naturally then, it is impossible for us to recover completely the oral version of a poetic composition. At the same time, however, epic poetry discloses some aspects of its oral communication, which are telling for the occasion upon which epic poetry was *firstly* communicated.

Homeric poetry repeatedly associates song and, consequently, the skill of singing with musical performance. In the *Odyssey*, whenever authoritative singing is about to commence, the *κῆρυξ* places in the hands of the gifted individual a *κίθαρις*, which accompanies his composition.[17] When Homer distinguishes different kinds of *νόος*, which Zeus bestows to mortals, and which brand various areas of human competency, the skill of the *κίθαρις* is mentioned together with the skill of *ἀοιδή*.[18] In a similar fashion when Hesiod distinguishes different authoritative classes of individuals, he groups together

[16] Cf. Herrington (1985, p. 3). In terms of how epic poetry was sung he claims that it was not a fully melodic song but a form of either unadorned speech (*λέγειν*) or non-melodic chant (one sense of *ἀείδειν*). It seems that in the Homeric age it was recited, like lyric, with the accompaniment of a musical instrument. It is thus hard to miss the powerful impact that music had on the audience due to its pleasing effect (*τέρψις*). For the view that lyric poetry was performed *παρακαταλογή*, i.e. in a plain recitative mode (cf. Gentili (1988), p. 35).

[17] Cf. *α* 153, θ 261, Σ 569, and *α* 155 (in which Phemius is said to possess the skill of both *φορμίζειν* and *ἀείδειν*), but also Hrd. *Hist*. 1.155. The same is, of course, true also for lyric poetry (cf. Theogn. *El.* 1.778, 1.761, 1.791; Alcm. fr. 41). Moreover, Pindar frequently pairs a musical instrument either with song (*Ol.* 2.1: *ἀναξιφόρμιγγες ὕμνοι* and 4.2: *ποικιλοφόρμιγγος ἀοιδᾶς*, cf. *Nem.* 4.14-6 and 4.44) or with its ability to produce a wide gamut of sounds (*Ol.* 3.8), which are interestingly enough compared to the sounds of the human voice and language, since the *phorminx* is described as *ποικιλόγαρυς*. These examples suggest that in archaic poetry the word is always the melodic word and that performance is always musical performance.

[18] Cf. N 731. See also *α* 159.

the *ἀοιδοί* with the *κιθαρισταί* in a single class.[19] In addition, in the *Iliad* Patroclus finds Achilles soothing his mind (*φρένα τερπόμενον*) with a *phorminx*,[20] whereas in the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus stretches the bow in order to slay the suitors, the poet tells us that he does so that as skilfully as someone who knows how to play the *phorminx* and to sing.[21]

Homeric poetry was at the time before it acquired its standard form audience-controlled and recipient-designed. The prominent role of the audience in the shaping of poetic performance is also suggested by that in the *Odyssey* the singer has to be requested to sing by the audience, which in turn suggests that despite his privileged status he was not self-appointed. The authoritative activity of singing, that is to say, was always a matter of public demand and not of personal initiative. It was, furthermore, licensed by the audience, and it is in relation with this that the poetic motif of divine inspiration can be interpreted. In light of this, the audience was chiefly responsible for setting the standards for poetic performance.[22] In addition, the

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[19] Cf. *Th.* 95.

[20] Cf. I 186 ff. It is noteworthy that Achilles sings about the *κλέα ἀνδρῶν*, a phrase which is frequently used in Homeric poetry in order to describe the very content of epic song. This belief is still active for Hesiod (cf. *Th.* 95-103).

[21] Cf. φ 406. It is also worthy of note that the mention of *ἀοιδή* is here irrelevant to the skill of archery. It does seem to suggest, however, that the two separate skills of *ἀοιδή* and of the playing of the *phorminx* were so intrinsically connected in the mind of the epic poet that it is impossible to mention the one without the other. Needles to say, the pairing of song to a musical instrument was still common in the classical age. Aristophanes, for example, invents the epithet *κιθαραοιδότατος* (*Vesp.* 1278), while he tells us elsewhere that the custom of *κιθαρίζειν* and singing after drinking is very ancient (*Nub*. 1357-8). However, he also mentions the skill of playing the *cithara* as a separate and independent kind of skill, which forms a part of man's education (*Vesp.* 959).

[22] It is in Theognis' *σφρηγίς* that we find the first implication of the notion that poetry is an activity authoritative in its own right and not fully dependent upon the demands of its public. Theognis expresses this view clearly when he declares that *ἀστοῖσιν δ' οὔπω πᾶσιν ἁδεῖν δύναμαι* (1.19-24). He is nonetheless confident that his poems will endure in time otherwise and because of their value. See also Nagy (1996, p. 222). The advantageous opportunities which the advent of writing provided the individuals with are discussed below.

authorising role of the audience is easy to understand, when viewed in connection with the oral status of archaic poetry. Audience approval plays a crucial role in the communicative circumstance of oral presentation for establishing personal authority, mainly because individual performance otherwise drops from collective memory.[23] In effect, any personal claim laid to authority would be thereby left unsatisfied, exactly because it is unsatisfying for the audience in the first place.

The role of the audience in poetic performance is relevant also to the examination of Presocratic authority. It is particularly useful in helping us to understand the poetic attributes of Presocratic style in connection with the set of necessities which the oral dissemination of ideas of the archaic age imposed. It also offers considerable assistance in approaching the question how these Presocratic individuals could authorize themselves as people worthy of public attention, even if the audience had not yet authorised cosmos-focused performances, and even if it had not yet credited an activity which verges on the investigation of the *physis* with a distinct authoritative status. The element of audience-control was gradually emasculated with the advent of literacy, with which the mentality of accepting daring originality and personal innovation of tradition finally became available.[24]

It should be pointed out at this point however that epic poetry became from an early stage established as an authoritative form of *logos* in society not *only* because of its pleasing value but because of the kind of knowledge later

[23] For an examination of this topic, see Thomas (1982, p. 51).

[24] To this view Havelock objects that the poet never really lost the authority of being society's encyclopaedist, as suggested by the fact that his formulaic speech remained till the end of 5th century a powerful medium for expressing cultural information (1963, p. 95). In late 5th century however the medium of expression was distinguished from the kind of authority it implied or required, something to which the works of the Sophists contributed, which voiced the conception of the *logos* as a separate faculty governed by its own laws. What this means is that by that time the tradition of formulaic diction was a fossilised kind of speech; it generally implied authority but it did not affirm the specialised authoritative status of the Homeric bard.

audiences understood to be disclosed by such poetry. A. Finkelberg has observed that in Homer poetic authority is associated with knowledge whenever the song is not subject to the limitations imposed by the banquet. This becomes apparent, for instance, in the song of the Sirens, which does not commit itself to entertainment but to knowledge.[25] This suggestion implies that the gradual disassociation of poetry from the banquet described in the epos and its incorporation into the public context of religious festivals eventually gave the poetic truth a different twist. Knowledge was thus brought to the foreground of society's attention as a distinct aspect of the poet's authority.[26] Finkelberg's remark is important because it implies the possibility of mistaking the tradition *about* Homer with the multiple oral compositions, which eventually formulated the standard version of the Homeric poems.

It would be therefore unwise to assume that epic poetry had a purely entertaining function in Greek society, since the aesthetic gratification which derived from poetic performance was combined with instruction. E. A. Havelock has maintained that Homeric poetry functioned as a didactic instrument, because Greek society lacked a formal educational system till 5th century. This in turn allows us to view the educational role of epic poetry in

[25] Cf. μ 184-91, Finkelberg (1998, p. 95), but also Goldhill (1991, p. 65). Finkelberg adduces the example of the invocation of the Muses in the catalogue of the ships in the *Iliad* (B 485-492). It is worthy of note however that the song of the Sirens is still governed by pleasure (cf. esp. line 188: *ἀλλ' ὅ γε τερψάμενος νεῖται καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς*). Although Finkelberg is eager to accept the pleasing value of epic poetry, he nonetheless maintains that it was meant to function as a precondition of poetic performance, insofar as it made the audience more receptive to the poetic *logos* (p. 90). However, it seems hard to lend support to the view that this kind of pleasure did not derive *also* from performance itself, especially when taking into consideration that early poetry was commonly accompanied in performance by a musical instrument. For the potency of oral poetry to persuade and instruct through pleasure, see analysis below.

[26] For this reason, it cannot be a matter of mere coincidence that Hesiod, the first individual who consciously adopts a didactic posture in the *Opera*, is also the first to famously distinguish between knowledge and the *possibility* of knowledge (*Th*. 27-8).

light of its oral status. The oral nature of archaic communication, that is to say, was partly responsible for establishing poetry in society as the most competent medium for instruction.[27] In such a society, *παιδεία* was not based upon education through schools and teachers, but it was a matter of indoctrination or, as K. Robb puts it, of "enculturation".[28] Following this course of reason, Havelock maintains that the poems of Homer were a form of "tribal encyclopaedia", since they functioned as compilations of technical knowledge, such as that of carpentry or of sailing. They were also a powerful medium of preserving valuable social constitutions and customs which were still current in Greek society.[29] Havelock concludes his analysis by stating that Homeric poetry was a "mechanism of power", since the poet controlled collective memory because he controlled the memory of the individual.[30]

However, it appears that the passages in Homer which present a technological kind of knowledge are dispersed and do not occur in a

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[27] Cf. Havelock (1963, pp. 43-5). See also Beck (1964, pp. 32-3), for the oral poet in general as the educator of his community and pp. 55-6 for Homer in specific as educator. He reasonably observes that Homeric poetry was responsible not only for the narration of past events but also for establishing patterns of acceptable human behaviour. For a similar suggestion see also Robb (1994, p. 33, and p. 174). Robb objects to interpreting Homeric poetry as a cultural phenomenon dominated by pleasure on grounds that such an assumption is based exclusively upon the Parry-Lord thesis, which is actually a case-study of Balkan song culture (p. 168). It does seem however that epic poetry understood itself both as instructive and pleasing.

[28] Cf. Robb (1994, p. 33).

[29] Cf. Havelock (1963), esp. Ch. 4 (pp. 61-84), and (1982, p. 226), also accepted by Robb (1994, pp. 164-6). According to Havelock, this is exemplified in the *Iliad's* scene about the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, which he reads as an illustration of the public law (1963, p. 79). In Robb's view, this function of the Homeric poems is manifested particularly in book viii of the *Odyssey*, which apparently describes some of the most basic institutions of Greek everyday life, such as the male symposium, the rules of *xenia*, song dances and games (1994, p. 35). Robb thus concludes that epic poetry was a collection of technological lore (p. 164). It is true that Hesiod registers *νόμοι* and *ἤθεα* as the content of the song which the Muses sing and, hence, of poetry in general in *Th.* 66. However, for a criticism of Havelock's suggestion see Harriott (1969, pp. 107-9), who renders his view extreme.

[30] Cf. Havelock (1963, pp. 145-7).

systematic fashion. At any event, it is not least unexpected to find in the oral poetry of epic the reflection of society itself.[31] This is easily explained when taking into account that oral epic poetry was a social product, and for this reason it is only natural that it occasionally addressed the common experience of its audience.

There can be no doubt about the educational efficacy of Homeric poetry. However, as R. Harriott has pointed out, some room should be allowed for scepticism about whether he was himself well-aware of his role as educator, especially when considering that his authoritative ego rarely appears in the poems.[32] The examples of Hesiod, especially his *Opera*, and of Theognis show us how the conscious instruction of an audience could acquire authoritative centrality in poetic compositions.[33] For this reason, it seems safer to accept that the educational tone of Homeric poetry is at least indirect, and that it results from the paideutic function which its primary material, namely myth, generally has.[34]

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[31] As Brunschwig recently put it, "it is in a work of poetry that a society reveals itself to itself" (2000, p. 40). For the same view see also Russo (1978, p. 49).

[32] Cf. Harriott (1969, p. 108), but also Sikes' outdated view (1931, p. 4). According to their interpretations Homeric poetry never lays conscious emphasis on its instructive value. For a list of examples of gnomes in Homeric poetry see Chadwick (1968, pp. 178-9) but also p. 390 and 392 ff. Contra this view see Robb (1994, p. 166), who insists that the fundamental cultural purpose of Homer was the formalisation of an oral *παιδεία*. According to his analysis the poetic effect of pleasure alone does not provide a satisfying explanation of Homer's "remarkable phenomenon" or of his prestigious position in Greek education. However, there is no reason why we need to justify here Homer's popularity, unless we are interested of course, like Robb, with Homer's reception in antiquity.

[33] West remarks in his commentary on the *Opera* that Hesiod draws from an existing tradition of wisdom literature (1988). It is important to note however that he does not identify this particular tradition with that of Homer but with one which is for us irretrievably lost.

[34] Nagy thus defines myth as a "coding of truth values through narratives" (1996, p. 54). For a similar definition of myth see Johnstone (2009, pp. 14-6 and p. 32). On myth as retrogressive, i.e. as a means of preserving society's past, see Hatab (1990, p. 194).

It is in fact true that myth reflects the memory of the collective and that oral societies generally tend to preserve in the form of myth information considered important for the establishment of social and cultural conformity. Myth, that is to say, bears a normative force, since it provides society with a common moral ground for personal action.[35] It is mainly in this respect that myth carries within itself educational overtones, which eventually made it a rather powerful and impressive medium for instruction. Epic poetry bequeathed to later authorities the paideutic efficacy of myth, which in that time went hand in hand with verse. This was so also for the Presocratics, for whom myth was still exploitable for their authoritative self-projection.

In addition, it cannot be safely argued that the epic poets can be held responsible for formulating their contemporary society.[36] Their social importance depended upon the way in which they revealed society to itself and for this reason they were expected to work with elements which were already present in the community by the time when they composed. This was the primary function of Homeric performance, the insertion of which in public festivals was a method of perpetuating the traditional ethos and of establishing a coherent cultural background for personal action.

J. Russo interpreted the educational function of the epos in connection with the exclusive nature of formulaic diction, which such poetry had to employ because of its oral recital. In his view, it is the regularity implied by

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[35] As B. Snell has maintained, unanimity for Homer is something mental, i.e. the *ὁμόθυμον* is the *ὁμόφρονον* (1961, p. 17). In a similar vein Robb remarks that archaic ethics was a matter of aspiration (1994, p. 34).

[36] So according to the Havelock-Robb thesis. Havelock argues that the story is subordinated to the educational material which it carries (1963, p. 61). So also for Robb (1994, p. 176). However, this interpretation is left unsupported by convincing textual evidence. Harriott dismisses Havelock's view, which he renders extreme. According to Harriott, epic poetry combined aesthetic gratification with moral instruction (1969, p. 109). And Havelock does not appear to be completely unaware of this double function of epic poetry, when he later accepts that the *unconscious* part of poetic creativity was also concerned with entertaining the audience (pp. 90-1).

the formulae that element which results in the construction of a coherent world-picture thus validating the common-held beliefs of the audience.[37] In effect, the authority of the Homeric bard is "traditional" not only because it intends to communicate culturally important information, but also because poetic expression is controlled by a standard set of words and phrases. This in turn left the epic poet with no option other than that of expressing the core culture of his society. The coherence inherent in his language naturally reflects the coherence manifested in his society, and it is in this respect that cultural uniformity, i.e. tradition, was communicated and eventually preserved by Homeric poetry. Such an interpretation, furthermore, not only explains Homer's role as teacher in terms of the natural implications of his oral style, but it also accords with the way in which epic poetry defines poetic expertise as that particular type of *σοφία* which relies upon the possession of a specific craft. The epic descriptions of poetic authority, moreover, appear to imply the skill of a good command of language insofar as the successful delivery of epic authority called for a dexterous implementation of the formulae. After all, as B. Peabody has maintained, in practice oral composition was not a case of mixing words randomly.[38]

However, in examining the nature of epic authority we should not give our full and exclusive attention to the potentially instructive features of the

[37] Cf. Russo (1978, pp. 45-9). He examines the levels of regularity in Homeric language, the fifth of which is the "outlook", i.e. the presentation to the audience of coherent world-picture, which nonetheless *has* to make sense for them. Russo concludes that the picture of society in Homeric poetry "emanates from its normative centre". This in turn implies that the social information present in Homer was available to the poet prior to his composition, which nonetheless gave it a voice in society. For the way in which Homeric language mirrors the reality of the world see Johnstone (2009, p. 25) following Eliade (1963, p. 6). This belief in the reality of language was inherited by Heraclitus, who of course reinterpreted and used it in new cosmological terms.

[38] Cf. Peabody (1975, p. 112).

epos.[39] This is not to say that Homeric poetry meant to entertain all audiences throughout the ages, but that it aimed partly at entertaining that particular society which invented and fostered it. The advantage of not dismissing from our consideration the element of pleasure in connection with the authoritative function of the epic *logos* is that we thereby acknowledge the archaic spirit, which recognises a certain efficacious quality in the spoken word. In addition, this belief is further attested by the essential features of epic formulaic diction, which were believed to bring about a special kind of *peitho*.[40] This effect of the techniques employed in epic composition was reinforced by the oral status of early epic, in the case of which the repetitive rhythm reached through patterns of metre and of imagery made the content of the message all the more impressive and agreeable for the audience, and eventually memorable.

In late 5th century Gorgias interpreted persuasion in connection with pleasure. He describes the dominating effect which the spoken word has upon the human soul in terms of the potency of the former to persuade the latter by means of charm.[41] In his view, the trick lies in the natural aptitude of language to engage the soul of the recipient with the stories it presents and, consequently, with the set of information or beliefs enclosed in such a

[39] For an out-dated support of this view see Sikes (1931, pp. 1-7) and, more recently Harriott (1969, p. 109 and p. 117) and Thomas (1992, p. 51), but also Robb (1994, p. 163 and 168). The view that the persuasiveness of poetry results from the nature of its phrasing but also from the application of myths originates with Plato.

[40] The effect of poetic performance is frequently described in the *Odyssey* in terms of a silence befalling the audience, which results from that they are mesmerised by the poetic *logos*. The poetic *logos* was also believed to exert *thelxis* on the audience thus luring the audience into accepting the content of its message. The story about the singing of the Sirens, for instance, corresponds to this traditional belief. See also Hesiod's Cassandra.

[41] Cf. B 11.10. Gorgias illustrates the way in which the *logos* impinges upon the soul and stirs emotions by drawing an analogy with the way in which the *φάρμακα* applied in medicine affect the human body. For an extensive examination of the implications of this metaphor see Segal (1962, pp. 105 ff.), but also Johnstone (2009, p. 14). According to Segal, the effectiveness of the *logos* involves the emotional participation of the audience and is conditioned by *τέρψις*, namely aesthetic gratification.

message.[42] It then becomes apparent that for Gorgias pleasure is still a form of effective persuasion and, more specifically, an instrument which, once adequately employed, may orient the audience toward specific matters and according to the needs and intentions of the speaker, thus interfering with their personal opinions and accomplishing persuasion.

It can be generally said that the personal authority of the epic poet did not require a straightforward argumentation in defence of its authoritative status, mainly because the belief in the poet's divine inspiration was accepted by the audience as a sufficient guarantee for the authoritativeness of his message. Later tradition explains the persuasiveness of epic accounts in connection with the aesthetic gratification which resulted from poetic performance. E. Minchin has recently maintained that the surface features of epic song (including rhythm, alliteration, assonance and the formulae) do not only imply the personal mastery of the poet. They also affect the way in which the Greek audience experienced epic poetry, and for this reason they formed a part of its entertainment.[43] In the same vein, C. Johnstone and J.P. Vernant have maintained that the persuasive value of epic poetry derives from its oral status, which they understand as the power of the spoken word to enchant.[44] These interpretations suggest that the surface features of poetic

[42] Cf. *Ion passim* but especially Socrates' remark in 535b ff. Gorgias' interpretation directly brings to mind Plato's description of rhapsodic performance. Of course, Gorgias does not mean the same pleasure which the Homeric verses in particular produce. He expresses a general belief about the human language, which he objectifies in his analysis.

[43] Cf. Minchin (1996, p. 13).

[44] Cf. Johnstone (2009, pp. 26-8) and Vernant (1980, pp. 206-7). In Johnstone's view, the competency of poetic language lies in its ability to engage the imagination of the audience due to its pleasing value. Vernant sees in the oral word a tendency to give pleasure, which he associates with the magical quality of speech, as for instance in the case of charms and incantations. Contra such interpretations see Gentili (1978, pp. 142-3), according to whom at the heart of poetic creation lies the mimesis and not just pleasure, which he dismisses as a mere artifice of style. It is impossible to offer a

utterance had the advantage of impressing the poetic message on the soul of the recipient in the same way in which Gorgias describes the efficacious cogency of human language in general.

At the same time, however, epic poetry was something more for the society than just a great model of language and of persuasion. It offered with its presentation a particular mode of conceptualising and of forming ideas about human life or the cosmos, which gradually became very influential in Greek society and which, in the long run, became a standard way of understanding the world. It could offer explanations, that is to say, of the mortal world as well as of man's relation with it and position in it. The cosmological aspirations of epic poetry were expressed through myth thus formulating a particular mind-set. In order to estimate then the authoritative gravity and novelty of early cosmological speculation it is vital to firstly examine the way in which the epos conceptualises through myth, to which we shall now turn.

L. Hatab maintains that mythic cosmologising constitutes a direct response to the world, because it does not reflect upon its primary material, and it takes existing reality as it is. This characteristic of the mythical mind, furthermore, presupposes a unity between thought and sensation. Hatab goes on to observe that a sense of "givenness" arises in the way in which myth understands the world. It is in myth, moreover, that the extraordinary finds its place.[45] Hatab's view is attractive, especially when considering that folk imagination is particularly enthusiastic about the extraordinary. It can be generally said that the more extraordinary a belief is the more likely it is to find its expression in myth. This in turn implies that the mythical state of mind is not concerned with the presentation of a world view which is

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hierarchy of the authoritative aspects which were active in poetic performance. It seems that they were all equally significant for the successful delivery of epic poetry.

[45] Cf. Hatab (1990), pp. 31-34 and p. 162.

accepted on rational grounds or because it is justifiable in a plausible manner. However, we should be careful enough to distinguish that this is not to say that myth generally lacks any signs of reasonableness, but that it employs a form of reasonableness, which is nonetheless of a distinct nature. [46]

In addition, myth is characterised by a plurality of explanations.[47] It does not offer a single account of the cosmos but it accommodates multiple separate explanations of its reality. Furthermore, in myth every phenomenon or form of existence is dealt with independently. Mythical explanations do not therefore support a single cosmological scheme and they are not subject to the regularities of a standard and recurrent cosmic pattern.

If there is one thing which all mythical explanations appear to have in common, this is the element of divine interference. According to myth, that is, human world has acquired its current form because the gods were, or are, actively involved in the happenings of the world in which mortals dwell, and for this reason their actions were believed to affect largely its constitution.[48] Mythical comprehension thus takes the cosmos as a manifestation of divine presence. According to this frame of mind, for instance, every tree, mountain, river, city and the like all had their origin in a story about a god or about a demigod figure. Moreover, the participation of the gods in the world of mortals was conceived by the Greek mind in human terms and according to

[46] The context in which archaic poetry in general was presented did not altogether lack a reflective mood. The symposium obviously attests to the opposite. The point here is that this kind of reflectiveness, nurtured by the friendly and happy atmosphere of the symposium, does not appear as the product of a systematic or joined effort. It depended upon the personal initiative of the individual poet, insofar as it was permitted by the flexible rules of the symposium. Lyric poetry in specific favours but it does not *require* personal reflection in the process of composition.

[47] See also Hatab *op. cit.*

[48] Thus Lloyd claims that the myth explains in a restricted sense, according to which one unknown is replaced by another. Myth, in Lloyd's view, tells us *why* but not *how* the cosmic reality occurs (1979, p. 32 and pp. 52-3).

standards of human behaviour. In fact, it *is* human behaviour viewed however from a different angle.

In addition, myth does not describe the particular details of the process which generated a cosmic phenomenon, although it does provide a higher inaccessible cause for it, provided of course that we are eager to accept that gods is not what one normally encounters in everyday life. Myth, and through it poetry, accounts for the past and present but it does not account for the future, since divine will is rather fickle and impossible, at least for poetry, to predict, because there is no guarantee of the way in which gods will act in the future.[49] In effect, mythical reason does not pursue the element of predictability in connection with the cosmic happenings, and for this reason it falls short of providing the audience with a firm cosmological framework. Myth can be thus said to explain the way things are *or* the way they once were but it does not as a rule provide its audience with a clue of how things will occur in future time. It is in this respect that Presocratic cosmologies signal a departure from the traditional poetic mindset, since the cosmic infrastructure which they propose is not valid only for past and present times but also for the future.

In light of this evidence, it cannot be safely argued that myth deliberately and systematically discloses a cosmology. Epic poetry is concerned with the human enterprise and for this reason it is only natural that it occasionally attempts to answer some of the basic questions which naturally occur to men, such as their position in the cosmos or the origins of existence.

[49] It is only fair to exclude Hesiod from this observation. In the *Opera* he presents an impressive, imaginative and inspired view about the succession of human races, which are apparently doomed to gradual deterioration and moral decadence. For an analysis of the meaning of this myth in Hesiod, see Vernant (1982, p. 3). However, this is the exclusive example of the Greek epos putting forward an explanation with prophetic overtones, and for this reason it is perhaps more useful in examining the way in which the poetry of Hesiod is distinguished from its Homeric background, which of course goes beyond the interest of this analysis.

At the same time however, the explanations provided by myth are not primarily focused upon a thorough investigation of these questions. Myths are stories and epic poetry is interested in singing these stories from the past about how gods affected, and thus still affect, the human world or human life in general. Cosmological explanations thus constitute an irregular and intermittent area of myth and they are not characteristic of every story, which the epos recounts. They form a special subcategory of myth, since they do not define or determine its every aspect, and they do not lie in the heart of epico-poetic statements of authority.

All the same, it is only fair to distinguish at this point Hesiod's view of the world from that presented in Homeric poetry. In the *Theogony* Hesiod deals with the past but he gives a new twist to Homer's version. Hesiod does not simply recount in Homeric fashion past heroic deeds and specific stories, but he goes even further back to the very origins of the world. This in turn implies that Hesiod does not share the same priorities and concerns with Homer. Of course, for him the world is still governed by the gods, only that he elaborates and clarifies the particular genealogical order which lies underneath it. Hesiod thus offers a more systematic and more abstract approach to the problem of understanding the cosmos, which is not yet formulated however as a specific question to be answered. This is also suggested by the fact that to Hesiod's religious mind cosmology is still understood as cosmogony and, more specifically, as theology. Hesiod also does not reject Homer on such grounds (unless perhaps in *Th.* 27) but he enriches and refines his beliefs. Homeric and Hesiodic types of cosmic understanding remain thus essentially the same, and Hesiod still thinks in Homeric terms, albeit with a somewhat more apparent "philosophical"

impulse.[50] If we are eager to accept that the poetry of Hesiod offers an account of the cosmos, then we shall at least admit that he understands the world basically in terms of sexual unions, which may anticipate Presocratic cosmologising but is at the same time of a different nature.

ii) The art of divination

a) The oracles

The oracles were institutionalised centres with perhaps the most influential authoritative position in society. Their responses were understood to express the highest form of knowledge achievable by mortals, which could be acquired through a direct or indirect communication with the divine. According to Xenophon, for example, the oracles were consulted about matters unattainable by human wisdom, and that they provided society with a possible answer, whenever the basic capacity of human intelligence failed.[51] The kind of knowledge they divulged in the community was understood in connection with a divine source, and was thus of a divine, i.e. transcendental, status. They were consulted by either individuals or by city-states.[52] Oracular knowledge was thus considered authoritative for both everyday personal matters as well as for important civil affairs. In the ancient world the

[50] For the same conclusion see Hatab (1990, p. 161). Hatab makes the stimulating observation that Hesiod traces the origins of existence but not the first principles of the cosmos. In his view this is manifested in that in the Hesiodic account gods appear out of nowhere, since Hesiod simply says that they *ἐγένοντο* (p. 64). Indeed, Hesiod's description of the origins of the world is no less abstract than in any other case of archaic cosmological *ἀρχή*.

[51] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.6-9. See also Price (1985, pp. 153-4).

[52] Fontenrose thus distinguishes the following four topics of oracular responses: *res divinae, res publicae, res domesticae* and *profanae*, i.e. ethical commands, which were regularly phrased in the form of gnomes (1978, pp. 24-27 and Table II). Fontenrose also points out that in terms of the civic affairs for which the oracle provided guidance, the majority of the surviving oracular responses deals with approvals of cult laws and treatises, but also with proposals of cult foundation (p. 22).

authority of the oracles reigned supreme in both the public and the private sphere.[53]

In terms of the content of the knowledge presented by the oracular responses J.E. Fontenrose has offered an extensive list of the different kinds of questions, which were asked to the oracles. His examination of surviving oracular pronouncements clearly shows that the majority of historical oracular responses is characterised by an imperative mood, and that they regularly advise on whether a particular action should be performed or not.[54] Furthermore, the standard set of questions used in inquiring the oracle confirms that in most cases there had to be a practical reason for the inquiry.

The content of oracular knowledge was thus of a practical nature, insofar as it advised the inquirer on the particular course of action that he should follow. It offered an authorisation of his personal intention or, to put it differently, it proffered institutional approval and orientation in inquiring the oracles, thus supervising human activity. It is noteworthy that while epic poetry provided its audience with a divinely inspired knowledge of past events, and which was not, strictly speaking, immediately applicable to specific matters of their everyday enterprise, oracular centres provided to the community a divine knowledge that could be straightaway applied to human life. The modern mind usually expects to find in oracular pronouncements an

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[53] For an examination of the prominent status of Delphi amongst the Greeks, see Price (1985, p. 141 ff.) and Bowden (2005, esp. ch. 4: pp. 87-108, on how and why the Athenians consulted the oracle).

[54] Cf. Fontenrose (1978, p. 13: type A of oracular responses). See also Table 1 (p. 21), which compares modes of legendary and historical responses, and which demonstrates that the most common type of oracular knowledge attested offered by historical responses is that of clear commands. See also p. 35 ff., for the question formulae used in historical and legendary consultations. According to Fontenrose, the most frequent question formulae attested are: "(how) shall I do x?", "what should I do?" or "what is it better for me to do?". Cf. also Bowden (2005, Ch. 5, and pp. 47-8, but also Appendix 1, for a list of forms of oracular questions in Greek tragedy). This in turn implies that the questions posed to the oracle were formulated in a way which generally anticipated a "yes" or a "no" as an answer.

attempt to predict the future. However, Fontenrose's meticulous examination of oracular responses clearly indicates that oracular knowledge revealed the truth about multiple grades of time.[55] The transcendental insight which is displayed in oracular responses, that is to say, pertained not only to the future but also to the past or present.

Furthermore, the oracles constituted an autonomous source of authoritative knowledge, since the civic authorities could not interfere with their activity.[56] This becomes apparent also from that process of consulting the oracle was fixed, which arose from a clearly defined kind of authority. Oracles were given under specific and controlled circumstances, since the same standard procedure was performed prior to the consultation, and which took the form of a ritual. The process of oracular inquiry, that is, required the preparatory purification of the client. At the same time, the very process of the oracular medium obtaining the answer to the client's question was also standard. The process followed in consulting the oracle was thus organised and predefined according to a formulated tradition of consulting the oracle. In addition, this procedure could be performed only in the oracular shrines and not on any other site. This in turn implies that oracular responses could be received only within the limits of the oracle itself, and that oracular authority was in this respect a particularly localised and institutionalised activity Furthermore, oracular prophecies could only be given by specific charismatic individuals, who were the mediators between divine and mortal knowledge, and for this reason they were believed to transcend the limits of ordinary human experience.

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[55] Cf. Fontenrose (1978, pp. 17-8: type D). His list shows that the oracles could occasionally reveal a kind of knowledge, which was commonplace and known to everyone, as well as a kind of knowledge, which was extraordinary and hidden. For future predictions, see also, pp. 19-20: type E. Fontenrose divides future predictions into non-predicative and predicative, since not all prophecies were a clear foretelling.
[56] Although Herodotus records two instances of bribery. Cf. *Hist.* 6.66 and 6.75.

The domain of the authoritative responsibility of the oracles was thus clearly defined, since it provided an answer to a standard set of questions and it conformed to a fixed process of prophesying. However, although oracular knowledge was socially significant and extensive, it was not nonetheless unlimited. Garland has argued that an oracle would never offer an answer unless upon request.[57] To this we may add that the oracle was consulted by an individual or a *polis* on specific occasions.[58] It therefore becomes apparent that this kind of authority was expressed under specific circumstances, and that it was deprived of the liberty to practice its authoritative competency as a source of wisdom on its own initiative.[59] This in turn implies that the oracle had to be licensed either by the recipient in order to display its authoritative expertise, in the same way in which the audience had to authorise the performance of the epic poet.

Oracular authority was limited insofar as it was restricted by the question asked by the client, which anticipated a specific type of answer, which remained authoritatively valid only for a specific problem at a particular time. The reliability and truthfulness of oracular responses were attached only to a specific recipient and could be applied only in their interest. Oracular knowledge was thus to a considerable extent recipient-designed. It never exceeded the exclusive needs of a particular client and its content was never intergraded into a larger frame. It made known multiple truths, which were nonetheless treated independently from one another.

The expression thus of oracular authority was strictly limited within the boundaries of the oracular shrines and corresponded to specific social

[57] Cf. Garland (1984, p. 81 and p. 119. See also Parke (1962, p. 145 ff.), who argues that *αὐτοματίζω* appears in late 4th century with the sense of "to speak a prophecy without being questioned".
[58] For a list, see Fontenrose (1978, p. 39 ff.).
[59] See also Maurizio (2001, pp. 44-5), for the view that the oracles never constituted a formal body of knowledge but responded to particular crises.

needs. This is not to say, however, that oracular knowledge did not circulate at all in the community. We know that the specialised class of the *chresmologoi* was responsible for publishing oracular responses to the community.[60] To the authoritative class of the *chresmologoi* we also add the *ἐξηγηταί*, who formed an advisory body of experts on religious matters. Their task was to understand and make public the way in which religious customs, such as religious ceremonies, burials and purifications should be properly performed.[61]

In terms of the nature of the presentation and dissemination of oracular knowledge in society, it appears that it was in accord with the oral communication of ideas in the archaic age. L. Maurizio has recently pointed out that the Delphic tradition was in fact an oral one, since the oracles were both orally-derived and orally-circulated, which is to say that they firstly survived in collective memory before being recorded.[62] Maurizio's suggestion is confirmed by the existence of collections of oracles, which were either private or public, and which were delivered in a live performance.[63] This in turn suggests that the surviving written records of oracular responses stand last at the end of a long tradition of oral performances. In effect, the essential features of their style were formulated according to a process similar to that according to which epic poetry was composed and performed. Oracular expression was thus subject to the requirements and conditions of orality and for this reason it was characterised by a traditional regularity of content and phrasing. In effect, the group of specialists who were responsible for the

[60] Cf. Hrd. *Hist.* 1.62 and 8.96. On the *chresmologoi* as publishers and interpreters of oracles, see Collins (2004, p. 385). According to Garland, our sources make no clear distinction between the seer and the *chresmologos* (1984, p. 113). The etymology of the word suggests that they had at their disposal collections of oracles, which they recited in public (cf. Aristoph. *Av*. 960, *Pax* 1047; Thuc. *Hist.* 2.8.21).
[61] Cf. Hrd. *Hist*. 1.78, and Garland (1984, pp. 82-3).
[62] Cf. Maurizio (1997, p. 313).
[63] For these collections, see Fontenrose (1978, p. 165).

verbal transcription of the prophetic message into intelligent speech employed oral formulae and recurrent patterns of expression which were conventional, and therefore constant, but at the same time variable according to each individual case of consultation.[64]

The oral circulation of oracles had two further implications for the expression of oracular authority in the society: one the one hand it was to a considerable extent audience-controlled, since the authenticity of an individual performance could be doubted and a better interpretation could be sought, and on the other flexibility in performance was common, since the content or meaning of the response could be altered in its live publication.[65]

The oral communication of oracular responses had one further implication their reception by the public. It appears that oracles which addressed matters pertinent to the interest of a particular *polis* were open to public discussion and debate. Herodotus, for example, records such a critical reception of the wooden wall oracle, which the Athenians received from Delphi, and which only Themistocles managed to interpret correctly.[66] Herodotus' testimony shows that the interpretation and execution of the advice given by the oracle was left entirely to the responsibility of the city-state. It clearly shows, moreover, that the interpretation of an oracle was not merely the exclusive responsibility of specialists, since the *polis* could also lend credibility to those interpretations which were suggested by individuals, provided of course that they were considered reasonable and successful. It therefore becomes apparent that in the publication of oracular responses we find a critical spirit and the cross-examination of alternative possible

[64] For an examination of the conventions and structure of traditional oracles in verse, see Fontenrose (1978, Ch. VI, p. 166 ff.).

[65] For these aspects of the presentation of oracles in the community, see also Maurizio (1997, pp. 316-7 and p. 323). Herodotus, however, tells us that Croesus *read* the response of the Pythia to his inquiry (*ἐπώρα τῶν συγγραμάτων*), cf. 1.48.

[66] Cf. Hdt. *Hist*. 7.143, and for an analysis, see Garland (1984, p. 81), Flower (2008, p. 58), Collins (2004, p. 383), and Maurizio (1997, p. 316 ff.).

interpretations. It should be pointed out however that whilst it was possible to reject the individual performance of an oracle, it was impossible to dismiss the oracular pronouncement itself as wholly unreliable or false. Such behaviour would imply a distrust towards the widely accepted superior status of the divine and, consequently, the religious structure of society would collapse.

Herodotus tells a story which apparently accounts for a critical attitude towards the truthfulness of oracular pronouncements. He says that Croesus desired to test the reliability of oracular wisdom in the following manner: he sent out on a mission his representatives to inquire various oracles what Croesus was doing on the 100th day from their departure from Sardeis. According to Herodotus, only the Pythia made the correct prediction and gave the right answer.[67] It should be pointed out however that Herodotus' story does not imply an altogether critical spirit towards the institution of oracles. It is used in order to reinforce the authoritative prestige of the Pythia and certainly not in order to dismiss it.

It has been a commonly held view in modern scholarship that oracular pronouncements went hand in hand with ambiguity. The expression of the nature of oracular authority has been understood the deliberate tricking of the inquirers into error.[68] However, the examinations of historical oracular responses by Fontenrose and, more recently, by H. Bowden, have convincingly shown that this standard way of receiving oracular authority

[67] Cf. Hdt. *Hist.* 1.47. To this we may add Iocasta's doubt of the reliability of oracular predictions (Aesch. *OT* 707-25), which of course has a specific function in terms of the didactic goals of tragedy and should not be taken to imply the audience's shared opinion of oracular authority. For the representation of Delphic authority in Attic tragedy, see Bowden (2005, pp. 46-55, and Appendix 1, for a list of oracular questions which receive an answer in Greek tragedy).

[68] In fact, deliberate ambiguity was fairly common in future predictions, cf. e.g. Hrd. *Hist*. 1.53, on whether should Croesus march against Persia.

does not in fact correspond to the authentic authoritative tone of the oracles.[69] These examinations of historical oracular responses show that their understanding by the recipient did not require a special kind of cleverness or insight, since the majority of these responses indicates that they frequently took the form of simple commands or generally truthful statements.[70] It therefore becomes apparent that the oracles did not intentionally mislead those who sought their wisdom. The traditional stories presented in Greek historiography and in Greek tragedy magnify the perilous consequences of human folly, when it falls short of grasping the obvious and disregards the authoritativeness of divine knowledge. They are therefore meant to affirm the authoritative status of the oracles.

Maurizio interpreted the apparent obscurity of oracular responses from a different angle. She has suggested that this attribute of oracular style should be viewed connection with the fact that the oracular responses, which literature records, correspond to an earlier oral tradition of oracles. The content of this oral tradition, moreover, was formulated by a community of believers, who were naturally inclined to lay stress on the unquestionably superior status of oracular knowledge and wisdom.[71] Maurizio maintains that it possible to trace one further plausible reason for this common misunderstanding of oracular style. She holds that the oral circulation of oracles implies the involvement of male agents in the verbal formulation of

[69] Fontenrose points out that there are no actual historical responses of this type but only three legendary responses (1978, p. 13: type A). Bowden adds further that the rate with which ambiguous oracular predictions occur is 3/21 (2005, p. 49 ff.). Bowden rightly observes that the traditional stories about the oracles, which apparently register intentional ambiguity as the key-feature of the oracular sayings, are not so much concerned with the historical method applied at the oracular shrines but with the behaviour of the inquirer.

[70] Cf. Fontenrose (1978, pp. 22-4). See also Price (1985, p. 148), according to whom the oracles demanded intelligence but this does not necessarily imply that they were deliberately obscure in the first place.

[71] Cf. Maurizio (1997, p. 313).

the prophetic message, which is hard to estimate, since we are not in the position to tell to which extent these male agents, who were responsible for translating the oracular revelation into an intelligent response, altered the actual oracle given by the prophetess herself. Maurizio then goes on to argue that the female voice was always a voice of deception in antiquity.[72] This is an attractive interpretation, mainly because there is a conspicuous and persistent link between ambivalent language and female language in the Greek male imagination.[73] This suggestion is important because it offers some assistance in understanding the reasons why the female voice of the prophetess is represented in Greek literature as intentionally deceiving the male clients, and it thus reveals a possible cause for the tradition about oracular ambiguity.

Maurizio viewed elsewhere the rise of the oracular shrines to prominence in connection with the contemporaneous political atmosphere of archaic Greece, and in particular with archaic colonization. In her view, the ambiguity manifested in oracular language was meant to reflect the instability of the times, during which it was formulated, and during the uncertainty resulting from the exploration of new lands was predominant. Maurizio interprets the latter as equivalent to the exploration of an unknown female voice, and claims that ambiguity was particularly favoured by the clients of oracles, since they desired to know the unknowable by replicating it in language. She goes on to argue, however, that ambiguity was not just a representational strategy but also the foundation of oracular authority and the reason why it ruled supreme in the ancient world. According to her examination, oracular ambiguity can be understood to intentionally weaken the authority of Homer and Hesiod, since it requires a different handling of

[72] Cf. Maurizio (2001, pp. 39-40). See also Nagy (1990).

[73] See also, Detienne (1996, p. 79). According to Hesiod, for example, all troubles of mankind spring from the woman, whom Zeus gave as a present to men in order to repay them for his deception by Prometheus. Cf. *Op*. 560-612.

human language thus freeing the recipients from tradition and the types of authority normally associated with it, whilst employing the same verbal medium and a relatively similar style.[74]

It therefore becomes apparent that oracular expression drew from available modes of expressing divine information which were already explored and exploited by epic poetry. The correlation of these two types of expression is manifested, for instance, in that the oracles incorporated some of the techniques of oral poetry, such as, most conspicuously, the hexameter.[75]

The suggestion, however, that the verbal features of oracular language imply the self-conscious intention of distinguishing oracular authority from that claimed by epic poetry in order to become established as an alternative source of wisdom, seems somewhat farfetched. The oracles could be hardly credited with such an authoritative concern and the antagonistic spirit alone cannot be expected to account for every phenomenon in the ancient world. It does help us view, however, the authoritative implications of the use of epic verse in oracles in new light. It seems that the oral nature of standard archaic communication favoured the employment of the epic hexameter, and encourages its acceptance as a competent, but also suitable, medium for voicing an authoritative message. The archaic belief in the authoritative efficacy of epic phrasing is vital for the interpretation of the use of the same medium for the expression of ideas, which do not exactly conform to the essential features of epic authority.

The case of oracular style thus suggests that the use of the medium of verse did not by default imply an epic poetic authority claim and that it could be used in order to respond to the demands of the oral circulation of views

[74] Cf. Maurizio (2001), pp. 41-5.

[75] For the poetic form of oracles, see Nagy (1990, p. 61). According to his examination, the *προφῆται* of an oracle were the re-composers of the inspired message in poetic form, and were thus involved in the poetic formalisation of prophecy. Cf. also, Fontenrose (1978, Ch. VI).

and ideas, which was characteristic of the archaic age. It does prove, that is to say, that epic phrasing could be employed in alternative and dissimilar authoritative contexts in order to nonetheless correspond to a different authoritative representation than that of the *epos*. It could appear independently from the type of authority asserted, albeit it always hinted at a superior and not immediately graspable kind of knowledge.

At the same time it implied to the audience, because of the traditional associations which it carried, that the message thereby communicated was of a particular significance, and that it was expected to affect them in a beneficial manner. Oracular responses were thus understood to indicate the right course of action, whereas epic poetry was understood to instruct through pleasure and to perpetuate the patriarchic *mores*. It therefore becomes apparent that in our attempt to examine the nature of the available modes of archaic authority, it is crucial to distinguish that particular element of the authoritative message, which is believed to contribute to the audience's well-being, and which is for this reason considered by the practitioners of this type of authority central to the function, and therefore nature, of their social authority.

In addition, an overview of the surviving oracular responses clearly shows that the oracles do not generally appear to argue in defence of their authoritative status and that they simply provide some rather dismissive directives for human action. The widely acknowledged validity of the oracular *logos* was sanctioned by the belief that the truth which the oracle revealed was the product of a direct communication with the divine. For this reason oracular shrines (though not independent individuals such as seers) were in no immediate need of an extensive justification and verification for the authoritativeness of their message or of an explicitly stated differentiation.

Disbelief towards their authority was tantamount to questioning the divine order itself and, consequently, suggestive of impiety.[76]

The un-argued for authoritativeness of the oracles conspicuously manifests itself in the ancient stories which deal with the apparent problematic cases in which an oracular prophecy turns out to be false. According to such stories, the responsibility for an untrue prediction is attributed to human foolishness and never to the oracle itself, the authoritative status of which remained intact even if it was proven to be wrong. Oracular centres thus retained their authoritative prestige as reliable sources of superior knowledge and insight into human affairs. Greek society found this cunning way of confirming the authoritative trustworthiness of oracles against the possibility of error. If the authority of an oracle was doubted, this would provoke a feeling of distrust towards the gods, which could not withstand in a society as devoted to its gods as that of ancient Greece.

In light of this, the gods of the Greeks were believed to always speak the truth and to be thus excused them from the possibility of error. In this way faith in the system remained intact despite its occasional imprecision or incorrectness. After all, Apollo was said to have a *νημερτέα βουλή*.[77] In addition, G. Nagy observed that Apollo (*Ἄπέλλω* in Doric and *Ἄπείλον* in Cypriot) derives from the Homeric verb *ἀπειλέω* (as in the Spartian *Ἄπέλλα*), which means "to hold out authoritatively in the way of either promise or threat".[78] It is also worthy of note that the prestigious status, which oracular revelations had for the Greeks corresponds to the commonly held belief that divine wisdom can be potentially communicated to mortals, albeit not in

[76] See also Flower (2008), p. 18. Oracular pronouncements were not beyond doubt because their "ambiguity" was pregnant with meaning, as Maurizio, for example, holds (2001, p. 45).
[77] Cf. *Hymn. Hom.*, In Apoll. 292.
[78] Cf. Nagy (1990, p. 59).

familiar or wholly human terms. Our literary sources, although relatively remote from historical actuality, occasionally imply the traditional view that the gods are apt to disclose their high-status knowledge to mortals. However, they were not believed to do not in a fully comprehensible fashion, but they were expected to communicate a significant part of their knowledge. It was left in the responsibility of the inquirer to reconstruct the compete picture which the oracle indicated in an indirect manner. The authoritative reliability of the knowledge or information it divulged was never questioned and the clients always sought for the best interpretation of the prophetic message. The oracles retained their social influence and prominent status through antiquity and their advice was always taken into consideration.

b) The seers

The modern mind is naturally inclined to regard the art of divination as a primitive and irrational habit but Flower has convincingly argued that this view is wrong and quite far from the archaic reality. Throughout his examination Flower rightly argues that it is impossible to impose a distinction between different and wholly different kinds of divination based on the inspirational and non-inspirational categorisation, since it is highly unlikely that such a rigid classification existed in the ancient world. He reasonably points out that the theoretical underpinnings of manticism can be very sophisticated and observes that it is an authoritative activity which is actually an attempt to extent the range of the rational by encompassing what is graspable, though not immediately perceptible, in human terms.[79]

[79] In light of this observation, Flower also dismisses as unreliable the proposed categorisation of divination into inspirational and non-inspirational on grounds that divination in fact included a far wider range of techniques than the one which this division acknowledges (cf. 2008, p. 13, and pp. 85-7). Contra his view, see Nagy

It seems that the reception of mantic as manic originates in Plato, who attacked the poets and the prophets on grounds of the "irrational" value and function of their authority.[80] In terms of the etymology which Plato adduces in the *Timaeus*, his view is not completely wrong, since, as Flower maintains, the word *μάντις* derives from the root *μαν-*, which is identical to *μα-*, as in the unattested present of **μάω*, which stands for "to desire passionately".[81] At any event, Plato attempted to distinguish different types of authority, according to different grades of rationality. At the same time however, it is plain to see that in this way Plato aimed partly in substantiating the basis of his personal authoritative enterprise and superiority. His testimony therefore is unable to support an actual account of the essential features of mantic authority, since it reconstructs the authoritative identity and outlook of the seers in such a way that Plato's authoritative advantages become too obvious to be objected to by the audience.

In addition, Plato has misinterpreted, perhaps deliberately, one important characteristic of the seer's activity. It seems *prima facie* permissible to accept that the seer was a person who prophesised in a state of altered consciousness, insofar as the knowledge he communicated and, more specifically, the method he employed in perceiving this knowledge was not ordinary or reachable by the application of normal human intelligence. In

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(1990, p. 64), for whom the Pythia is a *μάντις ἔνθεος*. It is worthy of note, however, that Nagy's analysis does not discern the authoritative status of the *μάντις* from that of the *προφήτης*. Although statements which the Pythia made were a form of manticism, that is to say, she was commonly referred to nonetheless as *προφῆτις* and not as *μάντις*, who was a different kind of diviner (Cf. Eur. *Ion*, 42, 321, and 1322-3; Pl. *Phdr*. 244a; Plutarch, *De defect. oracul.* 414B6; Iambl. *Myst*. 3.11.50; and Michael. Psel. *Theolog*. 19.76. It cannot be safely argued therefore that the *προφήτης* "communicated the message of a *μάντις*", as Nagy has it.

[80] Cf. *Phdr*. 433c; and *Tim.* 71e-72b. For *μαντική* as *μανία θεῶν*, see *Phdr*. 244a ff., and Suda's definition of *ἐνθουσιασμός* as *ὅταν ἡ ψυχὴ ὅλη ἐλλάμπηται ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου*.

[81] Cf. *Tim. ibid.*, and Flower (2008, p. 23). Flower goes on to add that the word *μάντις* is of Indo-European origin and it denotes "one who is in a special mental state" without however necessarily implying that this state is an irrational one.

other words, the authoritative skill of the seer was considered by the community as the best example of human capacity in perceiving and understanding out-of-reach phenomena. The information provided by the seers was intellectually demanding, since it was founded upon the interpretation of a particular sign or omen thus aiming in *deducting* a plausible directive for human action from the visually obvious.[82]

It is hard to miss the fact that the nature of the divine information (i.e. the omens) acquired by the seer is different from that delivered by the gods in oracular prophesising. It is unwise, however, to make a distinction based on the amount of rationality involved in these two alternative processes of divination. The shrine of Dionysus in the most prominent site of oracular authority, namely in Delphi, suggests that both types of mental attitude (i.e. the Dionysian "irrational" and the Apollian "rational") coexisted side by side. It also suggests that the two were closely related in popular Greek consciousness, and that they were not received as two wholly dissimilar mentalities.[83] The only authoritatively significant difference that can be traced between oracular and mantic knowledge pertains to the process followed in obtaining and expressing the divine message in either case.

The seers, and not the priests, were considered the most authoritative experts on religious matters, the authority of whom combined personal skill (*techne*) with charismatic inspiration.[84] Furthermore, the authoritative competence of individual seers could include varied forms and techniques of

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[82] For an analysis of this aspect of the knowledge which the seer presents to the community, see Flower (2008, p. 14).

[83] For a thorough examination of the exclusive way in which the Greek mind associated the rational with the irrational, see Nietzsche's monograph *The birth of tragedy* (1956).

[84] This is manifested, for example, in that the election of a priest did not require the possession of a personal charisma, since it was merely a matter of official procedure. In general, in antiquity religious faith was not a question of being loyal to the control of the authority of the priesthood but a question of personal faith and worship.

divination. The *Odyssey*, for instance, describes an example of possessed manticism, according to which Theoclymenus predicts with the assistance of his ecstatic visionary powers the forthcoming killing of the suitors.[85] In some other cases, such as that of the quasi-mythical and controversial figure of Epimenides, the field of competence of manticism could even extend to different spheres of influence and of social efficiency by including healing and purification.[86] It therefore becomes apparent that the art of divination had a wide range of skilful resources and of adroit techniques at its disposal, which it implemented accordingly, and that in the ancient world alternative types of divination mingled invariably without necessarily implying a deliberate or fully mapped out differentiation in terms of the kind of authority they claimed.[87]

Ancient divination was an activity parallel to that of the oracular enterprise. It employed its own specific art and had a different social function and authoritative representation from that of oracles. Individual divination differs in many ways from the kind of religious authority practiced in the oracular shrines but it also bears some significantly striking similarities. It also occasionally resembles Presocratic authority in some respects, and for this reason it is necessary to pursue an examination of its central features, which

[85] Cf. υ 350-7.

[86] See, for instance, the role attributed to Teiresias in *Oedipus Tyrannus* (285 ff.). Oedipus consults Teiresias in order to resolve the epidemic that has broken out in Thebes. The seers were credited with such ability, because for the Greeks crises of epidemics were caused either by impiety or by moral defilement (*μίασμα*).

[87] Cf. Garland (1984, p. 114), who observes that the *techne* of the seer was quite extensive and it ranged from haruspicy to augury, from celestial phenomena to sneezes. See also Collins (2004, p. 383), who adduces the seer's skill in ornithomancy and oneiromancy. For an examination of some of the techniques applied by the seers, see Pierris (2006, Ch. 3 (pp. 68-149). The same was true also of oracular authority. Flower has drawn attention to the fact that ecstatic divination was not the only way in which the Pythia prophesised. She also made use of other inductive methods (e.g. ornithomancy or cleromancy) and it is in this respect these two types of divination overlap (2008, p. 86).

essentially distinguish the authoritative status of the seers from that of oracles, thus determining the core of mantic authority, which formed a substantial constituent of the background of archaic authoritative claims. It will thus help us view in new light the actual particularity of some otherwise apparently problematic Presocratic statements of authority, and to interpret them in relation with their appropriate archaic context of traditional authoritative declarations.

To begin with, both the inspired prophet of the oracle and the learned diviner accomplished the same social role as authoritative intermediaries in the communication of divine knowledge.[88] This in turn implies that the members of their community recognised and accepted these authoritative individuals as qualified mediums in performing this demanding and yet necessary task. They were religious types of authority, the validity and reliability of which was endorsed by an implicit and coherent system of traditional religious beliefs, such as the communicability of divine knowledge to mortals, the intervention of gods in human affairs, the superiority and truthfulness of divine knowledge, and so forth, all of which were common and beyond doubt beliefs for the archaic Greek consciousness.[89] This underlying socio-religious structure accounts for the fact that the authoritative status of divination was so well-rooted in Greek society that it was in no need of establishing its authoritative significance by employing a reasonable argumentation, and that it did not need to explicitly differentiate the particularity of its knowledge and craft from that proffered by other specialists.

It is also worthy of note that the art of manticism provided the community with an answer to questions and problems, which were of a similar content to those asked at the oracular centres, the most common of

[88] See also Flower (2008, p. 86).
[89] See, for instance, Xen. *Mem*. 1.4.2-9.

which was the "what should I do" type.[90] According to Xenophon, for instance, the art of divination reveals what one ought to do and what not.[91] It then becomes apparent that the authoritative knowledge of the seer offered no explanation, or a set of explanations, which were intergraded into a single general scheme, but simply a guidance for action, and that as such it sanctioned the intention of the client. It simply provided the community, that is to say, with important information to be taken into account prior to making the final decision about a specific problem or crisis. Its authoritative purpose was thus to offer an orientation for what should be done always according to the general purpose of pleasing the gods. In effect, the knowledge of the seer facilitated decision-making, since it was not pursued for the sake of personal curiosity but for the sake of being correctly directed.[92]

It is also worthy of note that the knowledge disclosed by the seer did not, as in the case of oracular revelations, pertain exclusively to the future, since it could also provide insight into past affairs either by locating the root of a present misfortune or by illuminating questions of origin.[93] The underlying assumption is that the past was believed to be the cause of the present in the same way in which the future is formulated through present action. However, this system of interaction which divination assumes is never used to account for the world as a totality, but it furnishes a limited

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[90] As Flower points out in his analysis (2008, pp. 100-2) the most common set of questions asked to the seers was the "is it better to do *x*", the expected answer to which was either "yes" or "no". The client could never ask, however, "is it better to do *x* or *y*", a question which would very likely fail to receive an answer. See also Vernant (1991, p. 310 and Ch. 18), on oracles and types of divination.

[91] Cf. *Mem*. 1.4.15, and *Symp*. 4.47.

[92] For the function of the art of divination in society as a guide to action, see Flower (2008, pp. 74-5).

[93] See, for instance, the crucial role with Teiresias' knowledge of the past plays in resolving the epidemic in Thebes in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, but also Oedipus's inquiry to the oracle about his real parents. See also Flower (2008, pp. 76-8), according to whom the distinction between future and present was not as clear in this type of knowledge.

explanation of specific events. A particular action, that is to say, influences the present or the future in a specific respect. It therefore becomes apparent that in the case of the knowledge of the seer past, present, and future were inextricably linked, since the one was expected to affect the other. The knowledge thus which divination reveals (as in every case of knowledge, which the gods bestow) transcends the boundaries of time.

As in the case of the oracles, the authoritative knowledge of the seer was sought either by an individual client or by a *polis*. Individual manticism and oracular manticism addressed society on the whole, like epic poetry. They were two alternative and common customs of the same type of religious authority, the audience of which was not limited by any specific restrictions or conditions, unlike the participants in mystical cults. They were thus equally authoritative both for the uneducated folk as well as for the elite, since their higher knowledge did not address a specific social class.

The art of seercraft was practised by individuals, who wandered, like the rhapsodes, in the ancient world in order to display their authority and to thereby establish their right in claiming an authoritative status. In order to accomplish this it was crucial that they were able to advertise themselves to their audience as competent intermediaries to divine will and knowledge. They did so in order to obtain clients and to create a personal reputation, which would reinforce their credibility and prestige, but it would also assist them in making their living. They thus formed an authoritative class of specialised and itinerant professionals, insofar as they were the self-conscious performers of a long tradition of manticism, which fulfilled a specific function in society, and which corresponded to a specific group of needs.[94] The seers were received as specialised professionals because they made their living from a high-status occupation, since they could be richly rewarded by their

[94] For manticism as a professionalized activity, see Flower (2008, pp. 94-6; and pp. 146-7).

client for having prophesised correctly.[95] The mention of the seers in the *δημιοεργοί* list, moreover, further reinforces this impression.[96] It is in this respect they apparently share some common ground with the epic bards and rhapsodes, who were attached to a particular *oikos* in order to make their living.[97] On the other hand, lyric poetry was a money-free aristocratic activity. It can be generally said that intellectual authoritative activities were not commonly received in the ancient world in the standard modern sense of a profession. It is in late 5th that the more "technical" disciplines, such as medicine and sophistic oratory, brought into play the question of money.

As far as the differences between these two types of divination are concerned, it seems generally safe to accept that the art of the seer was based upon a non-ecstatic process, unlike the possession of the Pythia by Apollo.[98] In the case of individual divination, however, the personality of the individual did not merge with the divine nor was it completely controlled by it.[99] The seer projected himself to his clients as the competent intermediary in the communication of divine knowledge, but he was not believed nonetheless to be immediately contacted by a god. The seer claimed to have the innate gift of prophecy in the same way in which the Homeric bards claimed that the

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[95] Cf. Xenoph. *Anab*. 1.7.18-20, but also M 233, according to which line the seer prophesises *ἀπὸ σπουδῆς*, which suggests a professional, but also specialised, occupation.

[96] Cf. ϱ 383-5.

[97] Cf. θ 477. In this way they gained, however, the essentials, not money. See also Telemachus' comment that Phemius sings for the suitors *ἀνάγκηι*, i.e. not so much because he really enjoys doing so, but because he can in this way afford the essentials in life (α 154).

[98] See, e.g., the way in which the Sibyl struggles to break free from Apollo in the *Aeneid* (6.80 ff., esp. *fera corda domans, fingitque pre mendo*), but also the description of Cassandra as *θεοφόρητος* in Aesch. *Ag*. 1140 (cf. also 1084, 1202).

[99] The shaman, however, as Dodds points out in his analysis was able to pass to a state of "mental disassociation" at will (1951, p. 140).

product to their poetic creativity was the practice of a divinely inspired skill.[100]

However, the gift of prophecy was a permanent skill which could be successfully applied on every occasion, and the god of prophecy was not expected to be actively involved each time in the process of prophesising.[101] The seer thus was not, strictly speaking, a messenger (*προφήτης*), who obtained his message through a direct contact with the divine, but the *interpreter* of the manifestations of divine will. In addition, the seer was responsible for the interpretation of visual phenomena, unlike the verbal interpretation required in oracular consultation.[102] This also implied that he was thought to have in his possession a particular *techne*, which he implemented accordingly and regardless of whatever situation. Oracular pronouncements on the other hand did not derive from the employment of a systematised skill, since the authoritative efficacy of the natural charisma of being directly contacted by a god came to the oracular medium intuitively and spontaneously. It is also worthy of note that oracular divination involved a repeated experience, which was nonetheless able to provide a wide range of answers.

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[100] Calchas was thus said to have received his ability to prophesise from Apollo (cf. A 72), while Plato, of course, tells us that manticism is a form of *μανία* which derives *θείᾳ δόσει* (*Phdr*. 244a).

[101] For that the seer was commonly believed to practice a certain *techne*, see Soph. *OT*, 311 (*μαντικῆς ὁδόν*), and 389. It seems that the employment of a specialised technique was considered in Greek society central for the establishing oneself as an authoritative figure. When Solon describes the mastery of the blacksmith, for instance, he refers to Athena and Hephaestus, who symbolise in poetic language wisdom as well as the possession of a technical skill (Cf. fr. 13. 49-50).

[102] Peek maintains that it made little difference, whether the diviner was possessed by the god or not, but Flower has reasonably objected that from the seer's point of view this was certainly an important element of authoritative differentiation. According to Flower, furthermore, this was not important, however, for the client, since all he was interested in was to obtain a reliable answer to his inquiry. Cf. Peek (1991, p. 12), and Flower (2008, p. 87).

In addition, the skill of the seer was not practiced at a particular shrine or at a similarly institutionalised authorised setting, since wandering was one of its essential features.[103] It is also telling for the authoritative perspective of the seer that he wandered in order to advertise his knowledge and not in order to acquire it, as in the case of *ἱστορίη* for instance.[104] Furthermore, the seer was a man of his own enterprise, for whom there was no system or a specific context which endorsed his privileged status as an expert on religious matters. Consequently, he was all the more dependent upon gaining his personal reputation, and for this reason he was particularly antagonistic against other competent religious mediators, whereas the oracles were not.

G. Nagy has pointed out that the seer controlled entirely the verbal form of his prophecy as well as the successful delivery of his message.[105] In the case of oracular manticism on the other hand unintelligible cries of the Pythia were "translated" into comprehensible language by the specialised group of the *προφῆται*. However, the *προφῆτες* were involved only in the verbal formalisation of the oracle and they did not actively participate in the process, during which divine knowledge was revealed by the god.[106] This in turn suggests that the standard procedure, which was followed in oracular prophesising, required a hierarchy, on top of which was the Pythia who was mainly in charge of the process. This is also suggested from that she is

[103] For the seer as an itinerant specialist, see Flower (2008, p. 31), Garland (1984, p. 113), and Oliver (1950, p. 9).

[104] For an interesting examination of types of wandering in antiquity in relation with the types of authority associated with them, see Montiglio (2005, esp. pp. 100-1). In her analysis she proposes a distinction of those authorities who wandered in order to acquire knowledge (e.g. Hecataeus, Herodotus, and Democritus) from those who wandered in order to display their expertise (e.g. Xenophanes, Empedocles, and the Sophists).

[105] Cf. Nagy (1990, pp. 59-64).

[106] For the limited role of the prophets in the ordering and writing down of the oracular response, see Price (1985, p. 142).

occasionally referred to as *πρόμαντις*.[107] It should be noted however that this should not be taken to imply that the Greeks consciously differentiated the Pythia from the *προφῆται*, since they practically functioned as one. At any event, our literary sources make no such distinction. Yet it is always the Pythia the one who was believed to "speak" and not the *προφῆται*, who undertook the responsibility of assisting the client in understanding her revelation.[108]

Nagy maintained that the *techne* of the seer included a skilful handling of language, in the same way in which the epic poets exploited traditional formulae in order to phrase their divine message. However, this suggestion should be treated with caution, since it is not exactly beyond doubt that the Greeks clearly discerned skilful utterance as a distinct and self-determined kind of art. This was accomplished with the Sophists and the rise of rhetoric, in which case the human *logos* was firstly confronted as a distinct phenomenon, which implied a domain of specialised authority, and which could function as the basis of personal expertise, and which could be publicly displayed. In fact, it appears that it was a standard conviction in archaic Greece that any form of *logos*, insofar as we are eager to identify this with the oral presentation of an authoritative view, necessarily required the application of a verbal skill or it was otherwise rendered as unsuitable for communication or it would be otherwise eventually forgotten, which was certainly an undesired outcome of authoritative presentation.[109] In other words, every case of *logos* which laid claim to an authoritative status was required to display some amount of skilfulness in its phrasing, because the

[107] Cf. e.g., Hdt. *Hist*. 6.66 and 2.55, 7.11, 7.141; Paus. *Graec. descr*. 3.4.3.6 and 10.5.5.6, but also Thuc. *Hist*. 5.16.2 (*Δωδωναίων αἱ προμάντιες*).
[108] Cf. Nagy, *ibid*.
[109] For the view that the circulation of a message depends on its popular reception, see Thomas (1994, p. 51).

needs and purposes of oral communication were in this way served more effectively and, consequently, more competently.

For this reason it is preferable to avoid incorporating this feature of the mantic *logos*, despite its importance, into the very core and essence of mantic authority. The seer established his credibility and authoritativeness in the social group by projecting himself as the competent mediator between gods and humans, and certainly not by advertising his proficiency in verbally formulating his mantic messages. In addition, the seers are not normally represented in literature as individuals with such stylistic concerns, and their speech is never credited with a performative function, unlike the practical efficacy of the spoken word in the case of the *μάγοι* or the shamans.[110]

At any event, the general spirit of Nagy's suggestion is safe, since it seems safe to accept that the individual seer gathered under his control the disclosure and interpretation of divine will and manifestations as well as the publication of a divine message to the community or to the individual it concerned. Ancient seercraft therefore presents us with an example of individual authority and with a question of personal expertise. In the case of oracles, on the other hand, the ultimate voice of authority always belonged to the god and *partly* to his authorised clairvoyant. The seer was thus an independent and self-sustainable source of knowledge, whereas the oracles were established and institutionalised sources of knowledge. In other words, whilst it was impossible to doubt the authorisation of the Pythia, it was very likely to doubt the authorisation or skill in delivering divine messages of an individual seer. His authority could thus be received with scepticism, which the diviner in any case had to withstand.[111] For this reason, the authoritative

[110] See Chadwick (1942, p. 57), for whom the prophet is dependent on the immediate effect of his spoken word.

[111] This is manifested, for example, in the mythical example of Cassandra, who claims to be able to predict the future, but is nonetheless never believed (cf. Aesch. *Ag*. 1239). She declares that future events will prove the truthfulness of her predictions

activity of the seers was frequently characterised by a competitive spirit, the adoption of which aimed in displaying, and thereby justifying, their expertise.[112]

If the predictions of a seer were revealed by the facts as wrong, this meant for society that this individual diviner did not practice his art well and it was not taken to vouch for the failure of the art of manticism altogether. After all, as noted already, it was a standard belief that the gods always spoke the truth whereas their human audience could be easily fooled into error. The responsibility thus of error was never attributed to the gods but to the individual, either inquirer or medium. Furthermore, the human capacity for apprehension could never be wholly identified with the divine, although it could occasionally approximate it, since divine knowledge was believed to be potentially graspable. It is essential to note at this point however one further detail: in the case of the seers false predictions were a matter of personal responsibility and, more specifically, an example of a deficient *techne*, and not so much the product of their client's human folly as in the traditional stories about oracular wisdom.

We can now discern some of the rudimentary features of the specialised type of authority claimed by individual diviners. It was a socially important activity, and it addressed matters of public or personal welfare.[113]

(*ibid*., 1240-1). A similar statement is made by Teiresias in Soph. *OT*. 341 (*ἥξει γὰρ αὐτά, κἀν ἐγὼ σιγῆι στέγω*).

[112] Flower points out that in order to achieve this they could use the language of epic as part of their self-projection (2008, p. 97). As noted already, the oracles also exploited the authoritative implications of epic language with the same intention. For the competitive spirit of the seers, see also *ibid*., p. 13, and pp. 107-8.

[113] The author of the *Sacred Disease* attacks in the opening previous explanations provided by the *μάγοι*, the *καθάρται*, and the *ἀγύρται*, whom he describes in terms which apparently imply the authority of the seer (Chs. 1-4). His mention of the seers suggests that they were considered, at least in late 5th century, charismatic but nonetheless marginal figures. In the *Odyssey*, however, they are certainly dealt with more respect (ϱ 383-5). See also Flower (208, p. 65 ff.), according to whom the most

The authority of the seer also required the possession of an individual skill, since the social function of the seer could only be accomplished with the appropriate implementation of his specialised craft.[114] The acquisition of authoritative knowledge was thus understood by the seers as the product of a specialised and technical skill, which was mainly identified with the interpretation of visually observable signs. As Flower maintains, it was within the seer's domain of authoritative responsibility to choose the correct interpretation of an omen as well as to be alert (i.e. mentally proficient) in discerning the mantic sign from other non-mantic signs.[115] This in turn implies that his craft called for a combination of personal charisma with a personal capacity of intelligence in assessing observable experience.

Furthermore, it seems generally safe to accept that seercraft implied the practice of an essentially religious type of authority, insofar as it brought the human and the mundane in contact with the divine. It is also worthy of attention that the authority of the oracles and of the seers, although significant, was not nonetheless unlimited. Divination, that is to say, provided society with a form of advanced knowledge but it could only be perceived and communicated upon specific and exclusive occasions. It was restricted, moreover, to a standard set of questions and problems, and the oracle or the seer could not offer a prophecy unless firstly upon request. A *polis* consulted the oracle or the seer, that is, about specific matters and about a particular problem that had to be resolved. In a similar fashion, the seers undertook special assignments but were dismissed as soon as this assignment was over. This in turn implies that the authoritative pronouncements of the seers and of the oracles were confined to the particular needs of their clients. In effect,

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serious offence for a seer was to call him a *μάγος*, which denoted a relatively obscure and suspicious activity.

[114] Although heredity also played an important role in establishing oneself as an authoritative seer. Cf. Flower (2008, p. 37), and for an example see Eur. *Hel.* 15.

[115] Cf. Flower (2008, pp. 72-3).

neither the content of mantic knowledge nor the occasion of its authoritative display were free of the restrictions imposed by an existing tradition. Their expertise, furthermore, provided the community with a guide to action but they never interfered with the execution of their advice. They thus had little political influence, despite their social prestige, since the final decision was left entirely to the responsibility of the city or the client.

All the same, the seers were itinerant specialists who were not attached to a particular individual, *oikos*, or city-state. They were at the service of the community but they were free from its control, insofar as the interpretation, which they offered, could be doubted by the *polis*. In their case, moreover, it was easy for society to identify them as members of a distinct authoritative group, mainly because the content of their knowledge and the authoritative implications of their expertise were of a very specific nature and of a distinct social function. Their authoritative status was of an individual type and, although they belonged to the same authoritative case, they could occasionally compete against one another, but not, it should be admitted, in a systematic or fully regular fashion. In fact, competition was essential for the establishment of their authority in the community, since the publication of their truth was not exactly beyond doubt and public criticism. It seems nonetheless that society was more reserved in granting authoritative status to individual seers. The reason for this perhaps was that they were individuals whose activity was not intergraded into an organised and formal authoritative structure, as in the case of oracular manticism, and they were thus exposed to public disbelief and objection. In their case, that is to say, social recognition had to be gained through multiple and unfailing performances of their craft.

At any event, it can be generally said that seers and oracles shared a similar kind of religious knowledge and that they occasionally employed the same divinatory techniques. Yet the essential difference between these two

authoritative cases is that the oracles were formal sources of divine wisdom, whereas the seers were informal sources of divine knowledge. The seers were, at least to some extent, marginal figures, who practiced their art single-handedly.

It is also essential to draw attention to the fact that the seers did not openly contrast their authority to that of the oracular centres. Although the authority claimed by the seers and that of oracles converge and at the same time differ in several crucial respects, that is to say, their authoritative dissimilarities are never brought into a clear focus. This is important because it shows that it was possible in the archaic world to belong at a similar authoritative class without necessarily expressing concerns about consciously differentiating oneself from a similarly specialised group. It also suggests that authoritative competition in archaic Greece did not so much require by default the adoption of an openly argumentative standpoint against other authorities or the explicit expression of self-awareness, since it seems that the presentation and display of authority alone was considered sufficient. This was not the case however in classical antiquity, during which authoritative competition became more specialised and, consequently, more demanding in terms of employing convincing evidence in support of an authoritative status.

It is hard to miss the fact that the seer and the oral epic poet shared the same degree of authoritative responsibility for the message they made publicly available.[116] However, the nature of their *techne* was differentiated in one crucial aspect: the seer was an interpreter of divine signs, while the epic poet was the messenger of divine information. The knowledge of the seer was based upon observable evidence, whereas that of poet was certainly not. At

[116] Perhaps this similarity in terms of authoritative expression and presentation is implied by that the rhapsodes and the *hierophanteis* were dressed in the classical times in a similar way; they both wore purple robes and held a staff, which was generally used as a symbol for authority also held by the *kyrex* or the king. See also, Garland (1984, p. 102).

any event, their authoritative projection is akin to the extent that they both claim the social prestige of a clairvoyant who has a divine and, consequently unordinary and transcendental, message at his disposal, and which he desires to deliver. What is particularly characteristic in both examples of archaic authority is that they represent cases of authoritative *individuals*. Both the seers and the poets spoke on behalf of a higher force and their accounts were authorised by a divine agent, with whom they claimed to be on good terms. For this reason, they commonly viewed the communication of their divine message as a personal mission, which could be accomplished only through divine supervision. Consequently, in these cases of archaic authority the ability of the individual to be contacted by the divine was a requisite but also, and more importantly, a vital condition.

In addition, both types of authority were restricted in a similar way, insofar as the performance and display of their wisdom was conditioned by the client's or the audience's authorisation. The epic poet, that is, composed and performed his compositions under circumstances of total audience control. In a similar fashion, the seer was deprived of the right of initiative in offering his authoritative knowledge to the community. It then becomes apparent that divination and epic poetry were two authoritative activities which were subject to the limitations of a traditional conformity. They were to a considerable extent occasional, in the sense that they were presented to the public under specific and controlled circumstances.

At any event, the seer and the epic poet were both regarded as specialists, since they were both understood as the practitioners of a specialised *techne*. At the same time, however, the content of their message and the essence of the knowledge which they communicate is not understood and pursued in exactly the same manner and by the applications of the same means. However, they displayed an authoritative pursuit of knowledge, which, whilst relevant to the divine, was nonetheless of a quite different

nature.[117] The knowledge of the seer, that is to say, was to be applied to a specific problem, whereas the knowledge presented by the epic poet was to be applied in everyday human life altogether, insofar as it provided the general framework for human morality.

This is not to say, however, that they were always conceived of as two wholly distinct authoritative cases in Greek society, for, interestingly enough, poetic authority was occasionally expressed in prophetic terms.[118] It is impossible to offer here an extensive examination of the authoritative details implies by the poet-prophet correlation.[119] However, it is essential to introduce this similarity in this discussion of Presocratic authority, because it reveals the flexibility with which claims to a superior status could occur prior to the development of a more specialised authoritative differentiation. It shows, that is to say, that in archaic Greece it was acceptable, indeed permissible, to borrow the language and codes of authoritative representation from individuals with different authoritative aims and concerns without necessarily indicating an exact identification in terms of the authoritative status claimed.

The poet and the diviners both shared an inspired vision, since they both claimed to be able to perceive what the common lot can not. It therefore becomes apparent that for the archaic consciousness the transcendence of perceptible reality was commonly seen as a task that was normally accompanied by the intervention of a divine agent. At the same time however, it was also believed, quite paradoxically, to be a matter of human intelligence

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[117] Perhaps this similarity explains why for Plato the poets were the *προφῆται* or the *ἑρμηνεῦται* of the Muses (cf. e.g. *Phdr*. 244d; *Ion* 534e).

[118] The most conspicuous examples of a poet explicitly relating himself with a prophet are Hesiod's declaration that the Muses will grand him with the ability to foretell future events (*Th*. 32), and Pindar's renowned line *μαντεύεο, Μοῖσα, προφατεύσω δ' ἐγώ* (fr. 150).

[119] The topic was introduced to scholarly discussion by Cornford (1952, Chs. V and VI).

and of personal skill, as implied in the authoritative case of the epic poet and as made more conspicuous in the authoritative case of the seer. More importantly, such an interpretation of the primary types of archaic authority is not only suggested by our general knowledge and understanding of the archaic mentality, but it is also regularly and explicitly demonstrated by the individuals themselves.

2) Orality and the development of alternative mediums of expression

In order to understand the particular nature of the circumstances under which Presocratic cosmologies were communicated and to interpret the way in which they acquired the peculiarity of their authoritative expression, it is important to examine firstly the way in which important information was publicised in their times. It is therefore vital to investigate the role which writing had in archaic communication. The archaeological evidence at our disposal attests to a surge of literacy in the 7th century B.C. It also indicates that writing was firstly used in order to commemorate, to mark property, or to write down verse.[120] The most striking characteristic of the way in which writing was used in Greek culture was that it was public and that it was never confined to a particular specialised cast of scribes as in ancient Egypt or in the

[120] The archaeological items which are frequently used as evidence for this dating are Nestor's cup and the Dipylon vase, for which see Yunis (2003, p. 45); Nagy (2001, p. 28 ff.), Strong (1966, p. 38), Russell & Lewis (1988), and Oliver (2008, p. 231). For an examination of the early diverse uses of writing see Thomas (1992, p. 48; but also pp. 57-61), and Hershbell (1968, p. 191 ff.). Moreover, Harris has suggested that in late 8th literacy was already widespread in Greek society, as it becomes apparent from the custom of ostracism (1984, p. 47 and p. 55 respectively), which Thomas dates however, perhaps more plausibly, in mid 7th century (1992, p. 65). Havelock thus held that Greek society was characterised by "craft literacy", since the first and habitual users of the alphabet were craftsmen and traders (1963, p. 34, and 1983, p. 233). He has also maintained that writing was the invention of minstrels (1963, p. 50; followed by Robb (1994), p. 13). But Havelock's suggestion goes beyond the interest of this analysis.

Mesopotamia. The appearance of writing in public places (e.g. public inscriptions or graffiti) or on public or domestic items (e.g. statues and pottery) reinforces the impression that a considerable part of the community was able to read certainly by late 7th century B.C. Moreover, Rosalind Thomas has shown in her examination that the induction and circulation of writing was intrinsically linked with the emergence of the *polis* and especially with the development of law and offices, which generated the need for official and permanent records.[121] The early uses of writing thus suggest that it was to some extent a technological product and also that it was a social product, insofar as it served specific needs of the *polis*.[122]

There is a considerable amount of evidence which suggests that literacy was wide-spread in the early years of the 5th century, from which women were not excluded.[123] It is wiser, however, to avoid interpreting the wide publicity of writing as an indication of that the larger part of the Greek

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[121] Cf. Thomas (1992, pp. 57-65). To this we may add Solon's testimony that he wrote laws (*ἔγραψα*), which established a fair equality between the citizens (fr. 36W, 18-20). Solon's testimony indicates that by late 7th writing could function as a record not only for property but also for laws. According to Lloyd, furthermore, this public use of writing did not take the form of written archives but of inscriptions, which in turn suggests that the official records were actually on public display and were not hidden away from the society in archival stacks (1987, p. 156; but also Ch. 7 on the use of writing for bureaucratic purposes). See also Rhodes and Lewis (1997), and Sickinger (1999). Aristotle mentions that writing helps the keeping of records either in household management or in other civic activities (*Polit.* 1338a15-7).

[122] Cf. Thomas (1992, pp. 106-7). Thomas also points out to the use of writing for display or propaganda, which is quite different from the use of writing for administrative purposes. She argues that the content of written discourse is decided by social and political factors. She thus stresses the influence of groups with a developed and powerful social identity (e.g. the aristocracy) in the transmission and production of individual compositions. Cf. also Thomas (1994, pp. 33-50).

[123] Such as an amphora from the temple of Deidamia Zeus in Olympia depicting Athena holding a writing tablet (*τρίπτυχον*) dated ca. 480 BC; the Berlin School cup with a master holding an open book-roll crafted by Douris (Staatliche Museen 2285, ca. 485 BC); and a lekythos from Thessaloniki representing Nice with a book. See also Turner (1977), who observes that representations of School scenes become more frequent from about 475 BC onwards.

community could also confidently read and digest large blocks of written information. At any case, the first surviving examples of writing are usually names or lists, which are at best a couple of phrases long, do not allow for this view to be safely claimed.[124] As far as the presentation of literary works to the public is concerned it seems that live performance remained the main vehicle for transmission throughout the archaic age. This in turn implies that the nature of the communication of ideas remained essentially oral. Yet at the same time it seems that authoritative individuals, starting with Hesiod, made some use of writing when composing their works.[125] The induction of writing, moreover, to the process of composition had a considerable bearing upon the way in which authoritative expertise was defined and claimed.

The modern philosopher P. Ricoeur and E. Bakker have recently observed that the *logos* of an inscription does not have the exact same function

[124] As Lloyd has pointed out, in classical Athens those unable to read were not completely cut off from the cultural products of their time, since literary works were performed (1987, pp. 150-1; He points to Aristoph. *Eq.* 188-90, in which Kleon's lower education is parodied and may perhaps reflect the average educational level of the late 5th century Athenian public). There is in fact convincing evidence in support of the view that performance did not cease to be central in Greek life till 4th century, which has been recently brought into focus by Thomas (see 1992, esp. p. 132 ff., for an examination of the relation between the written text and its performance). On the oral nature of Greek communication cf. also, Havelock (1963, p. 39); but also Hendrickson's very early study (1929, esp. p. 128). Hendrickson rightly points out the centrality of orality throughout antiquity and in the Middle Ages, during which the written text was generally understood as the text which is heard, i.e. read out loud, including the habit of silent reading. In his view, this is manifested in that in Greek *ἀκούειν* is used synonymously to "reading". In order for a written text to be understood, that is, it had to be read.

[125] For the view that the poems of Hesiod were the product of an oral process similar to that of Homeric poetry, cf. Peabody (1975, p. 7), who examines the nature of the techniques employed in oral composition and the way in which they were used in the composition of Hesiod's *Opera et dies*. For a criticism of his suggestion see Havelock (1982, pp. 153-65). According to myth the inventor of writing was Prometheus (Cf. Aesch. *PV* 459-61; cf. also Plat. *Protag.* 320d-328d; and *Polit.* 274c-d; but also the parody by Aristophanes in *Av.* 685-736).

with the *logos* of a more discursive presentation as in the case of accounts.[126] What their suggestion implies is that when writing was introduced in composition this advance involved a creative use of language other than that of simply recording information, as in the early uses of the alphabet, according to which the letters were inscribed upon an item or a material in order to represent specific units of the human language. The important difference between these two uses of writing lies in the fact that in the first case writing conveys ideas, whereas in the second case it is used in order to mark property, or to identify a figure on pottery, or to express a short statement (e.g. inscriptions), or to draw awareness to publicly important information. The first case makes, that is to say, a somewhat more sophisticated use of writing. This non-technological use of writing, furthermore, marks a transition not only in the way in which writing is used but also in the way in which the individual composes and performs his work in public.

The use of writing by individuals, who laid claims to an authoritative status, brought about two important elements: on the one hand it established the permanence of the *logos* (it thus formulated the notion of a preceding tradition), and on the other it produced a more reflective attitude towards existing *logoi.*[127] The use of writing in composition meant that the account could not survive *only* through its performance, since there was a fixed version which could endure in time and circulate in different communities. In

[126] Cf. Bakker (1997, p. 26), according to whom writing in composition is a "form of speaking" and not the mere transcription of the sounds used by the human voice. See also Ch. 1 (pp. 7-17), for an examination of the construction of orality. For Ricoeur's view, see (1991, p. 44), who remarks that a "text is not really a text when it is restricted to transcribing an interior speech".

[127] But as Kahn has observed, the relationship of writing with the birth of reasoned forms of *logos* and with the adoption of a more critical standpoint was not that of cause and effect. In his view writing facilitated their appearance but it did not cause it (2003, pp. 140-1).

effect, new compositions did not have to serve the needs of a particular audience or of a particular society, since the popularity of a work was no longer exclusively attached to a favourable reception by a live audience.[128] The immediate dependence thus of the individual upon his public was thereby weakened, although, of course, he was not yet completely free from their favour or judgement.[129] This was so mainly because in the archaic age literate and oral publication were two complimentary forms of communication, and literacy did not immediately replace orality.

Writing also influenced individual consciousness in a different way. The question of committing certain events to memory no longer dominated man's creative intellectual concerns, and, consequently, new ground was made available.[130] To the permanence of the written word we may contrast the

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[128] For the permanent value of writing in connection with the way in which it affected the process of composition, see Thomas (1992, p. 62). For the view that writing contributed to the formulation of a pre-existing tradition, since it tends to canonise knowledge, see Harris (1989, p. 62), who also makes the suggestion that Homer and Hesiod became socially important in later generations because they wrote or because their works were at some stage written down. In a somewhat similar spirit Murray claimed that the poetic motif of poetic inspiration should be interpreted as an implied description of that the poet consulted his "precious roll", a view which has been received with much negativism in scholarly discussion (1960, p. 94). However, his suggestion cannot be credited with reliability not because it is absurd but because it defies the *ἀκάματη αὐδή* law of oral composition, according to which no pause is permitted in the poetic performance. For the single mention of writing in Homer, cf. E 168-70.

[129] Theognis' statement, for example, that *ἀστοῖσιν δ' οὔπω πᾶσιν ἁδεῖν δύναμαι* (*El.* 1.24) marks the beginning of the movement towards this new stage.

[130] According to Lord writing provided a freer opportunity for new themes, since the composition was no longer confound by those particular themes which serve the special needs of oral composition (1960, pp. 124-38). For the view that the language of an oral tradition in general is by default thematically limited, see also Peabody (1975, pp. 113-4 and 217). From a more general scope of analysis, Goody gives in his examination prominent position to the change in the system of communication in terms of the way in which the authoritative content of a *logos* changes (1973, p. 5). Jordan, furthermore, maintained that literacy stimulates an interest in a different set of questions; an interest in lists, for example, suggests an interest in classification. It also implies an advance in the mental capacity of man (1960, p. 9). For an examination on the performance of lists and catalogues in epic poetry and the

intrinsic fluctuation of the epic poet's *ἔπεα πτερόεντα*, since the epic formulae function as variables of utterance. This in turn implies that before the epic poems were written down there was no standardised form of the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* but numerous and alternative versions of the stories which they narrated.[131] These versions followed the same general plan, but a particular episode in the story was not nonetheless presented according to a canonised prototype.[132] The authoritative activity thus opened up in scope and in content but also in depth.

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cognitive skills which they require, but also on their difference from the Homeric narrative and their bearing on style, see Minchin (in Worthington (1996), pp. 4-20).

[131] As far as ancient tradition is concerned, Plato tells us that Hipparchus was responsible for the canonisation of the Homeric poems into books and for setting the rules for their performance in public festivals (*Hipp.* 228b-c). According to his testimony, Hipparchus "forced the rhapsodes at the Panathenaia to go through (*διιέναι*) these utterances in sequence (*ἐφεξῆς*) by relay (*ἐξ ὑπολήψεως= ἐξ ὑποβολῆς*) just as they do even nowadays". Cicero on the other hand tells us that Peisistratus arranged the previously disordered books of the Homeric poems (*De orat*. 3.137). In terms of the way in which Homeric poems were delivered Diogenes Laertius informs us that *τά τε Ὁμήρου ἐξ ὑποβολῆς ῥαψῳδεῖσθαι, οἷον ὅπου ὁ πρῶτος ἔληξεν, ἐκεῖθεν ἄρχεσθαι τὸν ἐχόμενον* (I. 57). For an examination of the expressions *ἐξ ὑποβολῆς* and *ἐξ ὑπολήψεως ῥαψῳδεῖν*, see Davison (1959, pp. 216-222).

[132] For an examination of writing in Homer, cf. Bakker (*ibid*., Ch. 2 (pp. 18-32)). Bakker rightly points out that the writing of the Homeric poems provided a normative model for re-enactment, which he understands as an attempt to establish a canon for multiple and sundry presentations. Cf. also Nagy (1996), Ch. 1 (pp. 7-38) on the poetics of variation in Homeric poetry, which he terms as *mouvance*, i.e. "composition-in-performance". See also Parry (1971, p. 336), who was the first to point to the instability of early epic performance, which results from the oral status of this kind of poetry; and Lord (1960, p. 13); but also Thomas (1992, p. 45). In the same vein, Scodel interpreted the motif of poetic inspiration as the implied claim that the audience should not think of alternative performances of the same poem, since it lays a claim to a *unique* moment of access to the knowledge of the Muses (2002, p. 114). In her view Hesiod's distinction between *ψεύδεα* and *ἔτυμον* registers for the first time the awareness of the possibility of error in the presentation of a version of a poetic truth, and it is used as a polemic against the varying versions of other poets. See also West's comment *ad loc*, who takes these lines to imply the belief that contradictions between different legends made it clear that poets did not tell the truth invariably (cf. also Solon fr. 29W: *πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἀοιδοί*, which later acquired a proverbial value). A similar polemic is expressed by Semonides' Palinode

With the use of writing in composition new kinds of knowledge and new areas of authoritative concern, and consequently new types of authority, we made available. The authoritative mind of an individual was no longer dominated by the social need for *mnemosyne*, and thus new topics could be investigated but also traditional topics could be critically evaluated, since at this stage accounts acquired an objective status. In a more literate society, that is to say, the individual can confront tradition, since previous accounts are canonised. In addition, he can relate himself to existing tradition, whereas in primary orality this is not achievable to the same extent, mainly because the individual *is* tradition, insofar as he is responsible for its perpetuation, as in the case of the Homeric bards. This also implies that writing made it possible for the individual to understand himself and the authority of his *logos* as something different from the cultural and social task of the epic poet but also from that of other traditional types of authority.[133] Writing thus facilitated, although it did not dictate, the birth of the critical mind, since it contributed to the formalisation of previous accounts, but also in the formalisation of criticism itself.[134] Writing, that is to say, involves a backward look at previous accounts, and enables the setting of one account next to another. This in turn

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of the story about Helen (*PMG*, fr. 192). At any event, the lying of the poets was not a question of wrongness but of presenting an alternative, and in some cases less traditional, version of a well-known story. Aristotle on the other hand defines the "lying" of literature as the appropriation of the incredible (*ἀδύνατα εἰκότα*) to what counts as credible (*δυνατὰ ἀπίθανα*), cf. *Poet*. 1460a11-b5.

[133] According to Goody, oral cultures are characterised by a general tendency of establishing cultural uniformity (1973, p. 9). In his view, this becomes apparent in national festivals, in which the rhapsodes actively participated, and in which the renewal of social ties was as important as the conduct of religious rituals (p. 11). This social function of poetic performance has been examined in the relevant section.

[134] For the view that writing encourages a more critical attitude, see Lloyd (1987, p. 72), Harris (1989, p. 63), Goody (1977, p. 37), but also Watt & Goody (1963), according to whom the modern sense of logic was a function of writing, since the setting down of speech enabled man to separate words clearly and, consequently, to manipulate their order and to develop syllogistic forms of reasoning. In connection with the Presocratics in particular and the way in which writing signalled the departure from mythical explanations in their works see, more recently, Johnstone (2009, pp. 39-40).

makes it easier to discern and perceive contradictions, errors, or omissions, and to claim authority on new and unfamiliar grounds.[135]

J. Goody observed that writing also increased the potentiality of accumulating knowledge and that in this way, it may be further added, it created the notion of learned polymaths.[136] Goody's observation is crucial for understanding the authoritative consciousness expressed in the relatively undeveloped literate stage of the archaic age, but it has received little attention in philology. It is nonetheless important to draw attention to the fact that the possibility of accumulating knowledge provided the background for inter-disciplinary conflicts. In such an era, moreover, the scope of a discussion was not rigidly set in terms of the kind of responsibility which the discussion of a particular topic implied. This in turn implies that the same question, or alternative aspects of the same question, could be answered by individuals, who did not understood themselves active in the same area of authoritative concern. This characteristic accounts for why the first individuals who attempt to claim an authoritative status occasionally address concerns and pursue answers which are not registered under their domain of authoritative expertise. At the same time however they start to display an awareness of other accounts which are in circulation but which are nonetheless of a different authoritative focus. Writing thus generated the model of the learned individual, something which is textually manifested in that from mid 5th century onwards the indications which suggest an inter-disciplinary discussion become all the more frequent.

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[135] In Herodotus we find writing as the record of various oral accounts (*τὰ λεγόμενα*). According to Herodotus it is the task of the authoritative individual to regard them critically (*πείθεσθαι οὐ παντάπασιν ὀφείλω*, cf. *Hist.* VII 152). The same view is implied by the opening of Hecataeus' work (cf. B1: *οἱ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί τε καὶ γελοῖοι, ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνονται, εἰσίν*), for an analysis of which see Scodel (2001, p. 135). According to his interpretation what Hecataeus means to imply in his first fragment is that he relied on inference based on general principles of probability.

[136] Cf. Goody (1977, p. 37).

It therefore becomes apparent that the use of writing in composition made available new modes of affirming authority. It also made acceptable inter-disciplinary correlation or contrast. Personal authority could now be defined not independently but in relation with a pre-existing tradition of attempts to claim a status of personal authority. In effect, the question of individual authority was now raised in relation with a context of other individuals, and new ideas were formulated partly as a response to existing *logoi*. The kind of authority claimed was thus no longer that of the social self, as in the case of oral epic poetry, but that of the contextual self.

Furthermore, writing had a considerable bearing on the rise of individuality.[137] The system of communication of primary orality, that is to say, favours a de-personalised expression of individual authority and hampers, due to the specific social needs to which it corresponds, the admission of a more outspoken *ego*. In a more literate society, on the other hand, the individual is more free to fix, and even declare, in his account his personal, and perhaps untraditional, priorities and concerns.

The existence of a permanent text, which could travel without requiring the immediate presence of its author, revolutionised the range of authoritative expression.[138] Writing, that is, weakens the efficacy of the oral

[137] For the view that writing contributed to the rise of the individual consciousness, see Thomas (1992, pp. 103-6), who points out that the literate mind tends to introspection and self-consciousness as opposed to the oral mind, for which these features are less conspicuous. See also Goody (1973, p. 9), Goody & Watt (1968), Ong (1982) contra Andersen (1987, pp. 38-41). The credibility of such interpretations is further reinforced by the fact that lyric poetry, which evidently adopts a more introverted angle than the *epos*, was produced in a period when writing more frequently used.

[138] It is in this spirit that Pindar proudly declares that his poems are better than statues, since they travel from town to town, whereas the same is impossible with statues (*Nem.* V.1-3). Simonides in a similar vein mocks the idea that a stone inscription may last forever, when a human hand can easily destroy it (*PMG*, fr.581). Hesiod, furthermore, perhaps implies the view that his poetry bears an authoritative

formulae, which no longer are the only available medium for publishing a message. In other words, formulaic diction served particular mnemonic necessities, which were with writing eliminated.[139] In the display of personal expertise, consequently, individuals sought new ways of establishing their prestige other than that of the skilful handling of the formulae. They could also interact more freely with language and experiment with words, since the permanence of writing allowed, in fact encouraged, the search for that particular phrase which suited best the message or the intention of the individual, and which could now be preserved outside the system of oral transmission.[140] This in turn implies that in a more literate stage the individual has acquired full control over his material and his language, and that he can thus use terms as part of his personal vocabulary.[141] He can also use personal recurrent themes, which are not barred however by the traditional phrasing, and which do not thus belong to a traditional oral stock of expression.[142] In the

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value not only for as long as the performance lasts but permanently (cf. *Th.* 27-8, as interpreted by Scodel (2001), p. 114).

[139] The gradual abandonment of elements present in composition and performance because of mnemonic necessity is also noted by Johnstone (2009, pp. 39-40), and Havelock (1963, pp. 42-3). In his view the omission of these epic elements generate the need for a new language and, consequently, for a new mode of thinking. Havelock interpreted elsewhere this characteristic in connection with the birth of Presocratic thinking (cf. 1982, pp. 232-3). It should be noted however that the Presocratic accounts did not in the first place arise from the need for a new language, as Havelock's analysis perhaps implies, but from the need for a new set of authoritative questions, an aspect of which nonetheless was the problem of exploring and making available new types of expression.

[140] The epic poet on the other hand may recombine available words and phrases but he can never devise a style which is altogether his own. At least this is not possible without violating tradition (see also Parry (1971), p. 270). He might occasionally search for new phrases but he does so always under the stress of the metrical conditions of the hexameter (Cf. also Lord (1960, pp. 43-4)).

[141] For an excellent examination of the linguistic task of the Presocratics and of the way in which they gradually developed a cosmologic terminology, see Havelock (1983).

[142] See, e.g., Parry (1971, p. 317 and p. 329), according to whom the epic poet is barred from the search of words, and this limitation is lifted only with writing.

long run he is permitted to submit his personal style, which will survive in future generations with his name.

Writing thus made possible the innovation of tradition in terms of both content and of expression. It affected the word, insofar as we are eager to accept that the formulae do not bear the same function in an account which was written prior to its presentation, and which was not composed in performance. This in turn implies that the formulae are no longer a vehicle for thought *and* expression but just for expression, and that as such they have different connotations in the presentation of personal authority.[143] It also affected the content of the *logos*, insofar as it permitted a greater freedom in the topics and questions discussed. It allowed, moreover, the attachment of the individual to more specialised concerns. It thus facilitated largely the rise of individuality, and it encouraged the appearance of the critical and more reflective mind, since it made admissible for the thinking *ego* to pose more confidently, more self-consciously, and eventually more competently and competitively in society.

The esteem which writing gradually acquired in Greek society affected in several crucial aspects the way in which *logoi*, which laid a claim to an authoritative status, were performed in the community. To begin with, oral presentation was not immediately and completely dislocated by writing. For this reason, the implications of writing described above on the way in which it altered the individual and social consciousness should not be taken to suggest a strict distinction of two independent and clear stages in the nature of Greek communication. For a considerable period of time orality and

[143] For the view that a formula expresses an idea under specific metrical conditions, by which it is however confined, see Gentili (1988, p. 39), Parry (1971, pp. 272 and 324), Lord (1960, p. 31), and Peabody (1975, p. 96 and pp. 179-80). According to these examinations, the thoughts which the *epos* can set forth are restricted, since not everything is expressable with the formulae. The epic poet could thus voice only those ideas, for which he could find a place in his formulaic diction.

literacy overlapped and constituted interchangeable but also interactive modes of presentation.[144] It is important to point out that the surviving Presocratic fragments under examination come from this intermediate epoch. In fact, orality was quite common as late as in the classical times. At the same time however the existence of two alternative modes of publication formulated a new set of dynamics in the distribution of ideas. Oral presentation remained the main vehicle for circulation, but nonetheless a significant change was introduced: a text was now used as guide, in other words as an aide-memoir, for whatever form the live performance would take.[145]

The use of writing by the individual in composition thus assisted him in the live presentation of his ideas, albeit it did not dictate to him in a strict manner the particular form of his presentation. In a more literate age, that is to say, the individual perceives his *logos* prior to his performance and for this reason he can shape and arrange it in a way that befits best his personal needs of presentation and of self-projection. In addition, writing functioned as the model for performance, according to which future performances were re-enacted or adapted. The performance of a work in front of an audience became a kind of live illustration of the text, or, to put it differently, its public and spoken version.[146] In the case of Homeric poetry on the other hand writing was used at some later stage in order to preserve it and to set a

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[144] For the continuity between orality and literacy, see Thomas (1992, p. 73), and Goody (1973, p. 9).

[145] For the view that archaic writing was at the service of the spoken word, see Thomas (1992, p. 62), Lloyd (1987, p. 119), and Gentili (1988, p. 15). The interaction between the written and the spoken, i.e. orally communicated, text is also reflected in that oracular responses were written down and later orally delivered in the community, for which see analysis in the relevant section.

[146] For an examination of epic poetry as re-enactment, see Gentili (1988, p. 39), and Nagy (1996, p. 61), according to whose arguments the rhapsode is re-enacting Homer by performing Homer, and he *is* Homer as long as the performance lasts. Viewed from the standpoint of mimesis, the rhapsode is thus a *recomposed performer*, and he becomes recomposed into Homer each time he performs Homer.

standard for performances of this kind of poetry. In effect, the composition-in-performance of primary orality gradually gave its place to composition prior to the performance.

In addition, the continuous interrelation of orality and literacy in Greek life did not leave style completely unaffected. Authoritative individuals had to meet, at least in some crucial respects, the stylistic expectations of their audience, exactly because public attention was central in a still essentially oral system of communication and therefore in establishing oneself as a credible authority in society.[147] In other words, they employed established forms of expression in order to correspond successfully to the demands of the communicative situation of their times.

The permanence of writing ensured that individuals could twist the traditional and familiar language in order to signal their novel authoritative intentions and claims. This in turn implies that individuals with new authoritative concerns could use the language of epic poetry in order to express their personal views. At the same time however they did not in this way affirm the same type of authority, although, it is only fair to admit, they did desire to claim thereby for themselves the same prestigious position in society. It therefore seems hard to accept that style means the adoption of a of a specific and clearly defined authoritative perspective, mainly because, strictly speaking, personal "style" cannot develop freely in a society which

[147] The familiarity which formulaic diction establishes is convenient for the successful delivery of a message because it makes it easier for the audience to follow the ideas presented to them, since they are not required to take in a new form of expression. This was due to the fact that literacy and orality were for a considerable period of time interactive, and thus the oral techniques of performance retained their eminence and social validity as preferable modes of expression.

does not use books as the primary medium of acquiring *and* of publishing knowledge.[148]

In addition, in the accounts, which make some use of writing, a word alone is unable to submit an account of reality, as opposed to the case of the Homeric formulaic epithets for example. On the other hand, reality is expressed through the combination of multiple words in an ordered whole and through the arrangement and sequence of several phrases, which function as the verbal illustration of more complex concepts and ideas. The units of expression are no longer single words, that is to say, but larger phrases, which allow, through their multiple combinations, the reconstruction of a more abstract, concrete, and less figurative scope of presentation. In effect, language gradually became the tool for communicating personal thoughts. This requires more, or at least a different kind of, intellectual effort on behalf of the charismatic individual in comparison with the narration of a traditional story-theme. This in turn implies that the individual was in this way more free to produce a system of thoughts and ideas.[149]

The advent of writing thus encouraged the appearance of more discursive forms of *logoi*. The epic narration, which proceeds with the development of particular storyline, gave its place to the opportunity for more detailed and specialised accounts, which could be now oriented towards the investigation of a single question.[150] In effect, the process of

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[148] In terms of the effect of writing on an essentially oral tradition, see Parry (1971, p. 270), and Lord (1960, pp. 124-138), who argue that orally-delivered poetry retains its basic features and functions even when it acquires a written form.

[149] It is interesting to compare this with the way in which comedy mocks philosophers and the Sophists, because *ἀδολεσχία* was perceived as the basic characteristic of their accounts (cf. Aristoph. fr. 490, *Cl.* 1480-5; and Eupolis fr. 386-88).

[150] Kahn has recently pointed out that early examples of prose, such as that of Pherecydes of Syros or of Anaximander and Anaximenes deal with a standard set of topics (2003, pp. 143-6; see also pp. 149-50 for examples of prose in other fields such as architecture, music, etc., which suggest the use of prose for technical purposes).

specialised differentiation was thereby initiated, since it was now possible for individuals to pursue an in depth examination of specific matters and to register specific primary concerns.

The first surviving examples of archaic prose are a couple of phrases long, which give the impression that they are apparently independent from one another.[151] It is reasonable to assume, however, that this brevity of expression was not regarded by the author as an obstacle to the communication of his message, and that this kind of expression actually corresponds to an quasi-oral manner of publication, according to which the audience is not yet fully accustomed to taking in a large amount of accumulated information, when read out. It is perhaps for this reason that these first cases of prose generally appear to avoid extra adornments of style, and to be characterised by a tendency to be precisely to the point and to not take so much interest in arranging their hypothesis in a coherent (textual) whole. The immediate implication of this is that they give to the modern reader the impression of being unpolished and, at least in some cases, unexpectedly categorical and rather dismissive in tone.[152] We should allow for

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Kahn also maintains that these works do in fact display an awareness of applying a standard order in their presentation, which begins with the examination of the first principles and the creation of heaven and earth, and ends with the discussion of the formation of human beings. In a similar vein, Hershbell contends that in more literate societies prose is the primary form in which experience is documented, whereas poetry is more esoteric and sophisticated and for this reason it is used in order to preserve a special experience outside the day's work (1968, p. 189).

[151] For Anaximander's book, see KRS (1983, pp. 102-3), and for Pherecydes's, see (*ibid*. pp. 51-2). The first work of prose which appears to have employed a more coherent form of presentation is that of Zeno. Guthrie and KRS have observed the way in which the preserved fragments from this work actually constitute an ensemble of multiple arguments, a characteristic which suggests some uniformity in terms of its content (cf. Guthrie (1965, I pp. 81-3) and KRS (*ibid.* pp. 263-5).

[152] The dogmatic tone of Presocratic speculation in specific is commonly accepted by modern scholarship, and it has been examined in detail by Curd (1998). We should be careful to distinguish however our modern expectations from those valid in the different system of communication of archaic Greece.

some time, however, for the particular efficacious features of prose to be discovered and developed by individuals.

This remark is significant for this scope of examination, because it will help us interpret in new light some of the most prominent archaic modes of argumentation, when taking into consideration that what qualifies as "persuasive" and "argumentative", i.e. acceptable on rational grounds, in a quasi-literate society is not necessarily identical with the criteria of argumentation, which writing establishes. This distinction is vital for the investigation of the peculiar features of Presocratic "argumentation", because their attempt to persuade their audience is not viewed in modern scholarship in connection with the nature of the conditions under which their works were published, although there are important indications that the latter had a considerable impact upon the way in which these first cosmologies were verbally formulated. In other words, it is unwise to expect from an audience of listeners to be persuaded in the same way as an audience of readers. In addition, this is all the more unlikely to be the case, when taking into account that at that time there was no preceding tradition of prose, and that it was much later with the development of the art of rhetoric that the potency and range of *πειθώ* were more systematically mapped out.

3) The publication of early cosmologies and their audience

Our analysis of epic poetry implies that it addressed society on the whole, and this kind of activity produced works, which were expected to benefit society. This is also suggested by the cultural function which the Greek *epos* acquired, according to which this kind of poetry was a way of preserving the ancestral ethos. When the poems of the great epic became crystallised and acquired a standard written version we know that they were frequently recited and presented to the public at religious festivals. However,

it is important to note that these poems do not generally acknowledge a context for their performance. R. Scodel, moreover, has recently pointed out that the *Homeric hymns* do not explicitly affirm the location of their performance.[153] It is worthy of note that the exclusive exception to this is the *Homeric hymn* to Apollo, which addresses a specific circumstance of poetic communication, i.e. a public festival.[154] In addition, lyric monody was definitely composed for relatively small private gatherings, such as that at the symposia.[155] In terms of the standards which were at play in the context of the symposium, it seems that freedom of thought and originality of ideas was permitted and in fact encouraged by its atmosphere. The adoption of a reflective standpoint was also acceptable, as the gnomic elegies of Theognis clearly show.

It therefore becomes apparent that the performance of epic and of lyric poetry made available two contexts for the publication of ideas in the archaic times: the public and the private. In light of this, J. Herrington has drawn attention to the fact that the archaic context of performance was diverse, since it ranged from private gatherings to the more formal setting of the public sphere, such as that of the Agora or of the festival contest.[156] In a similar vein, J. Hershbell has interpreted this diversity of contexts in connection with the undeveloped literacy of the archaic times, which makes the truly private communication impossible.[157]

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[153] Cf. Scodel (2001, p. 111). According to her interpretation, this also implies that each performance is independent. For poetic performances at public religious festivals, see also Herrington (1985, pp. 5-15).

[154] Cf. esp. lines 146-76.

[155] See also Herrington (*ibid*. pp. 32-6). It is interesting to note Philochorus' testimony, according to which the Spartans chanted each in turn a poem by Tyrtaeus after dinner and the general gave a prize to whoever performed it better (cf. Athen. *Deipn*. 14. 29).

[156] Cf. Herrington (*ibid*. p. 35).

[157] Cf. Hershbell (1968, p. 187).

In order to throw some light on the manner in which Presocratic cosmologies were presented to the community our best option is to look with reservation at the formalised manner in which philosophy was later presented. In this way, however, we are bound to accept a continuity, but also a kinship, between these two forms of authoritative expression. In order to avoid such a misinterpretation, it is best to bear in mind that Plato's works assume an audience which is attentively and consciously interested in *φιλοσοφία*, whereas this cannot be claimed with the same amount of certainty for the Presocratic audience.

It seems that Plato had a reserved attitude towards writing and reading, and that, as Havelock argues, the communicative situation which his dialogues acknowledge is still dominated by oral presentation.[158] In the *Phaedrus* he tells us that in Egypt Theuth discovered letters, which he expected to contribute to the *μνήμη* and the *σοφία* of men, who are still nonetheless characterised as *πολύκοοι*.[159] Plato's distrust towards writing is repeated in the unauthentic 7th letter, according to which philosophical doctrines should not be written down or they will in this way become available to those ignorant or to those who cannot appreciate their exquisite value.[160] M. Finkelberg has interpreted Plato's view in connection with that he considered writing as an inseparable attribute of mass culture, which was inadmissible considering his elitist approach to the activity of philosophising.[161]

The most telling Platonic dialogue about the way in which prose was presented to the audience is the opening of the *Parmenides*, which describes

[158] Cf. Havelock (1963, p. 38).
[159] Cf. *Phdr.* 273c-275b. It is also worthy of note that Thamus implies the view that memory is a skill that requires frequent practice (*μνήμης ἀμελετησίᾳ*).
[160] Cf. *Ep.* 340c ff, but also Edelstein's monograph (1966).
[161] Cf. Finkelberg in Cooper (2007, p. 296 ff.).

the circumstance under which Zeno's book was published.[162] In this passage Zeno himself reads his book, which he brought with him to Athens in order to make his work known, in front of an audience in the house of Antiphon. The important information, however, is found in what follows Zeno's reading. Plato tells us that Socrates, who is a member of the audience, takes over and asks Zeno to repeat the first hypothesis of his first argument. He then asks Zeno to clarify his view and thus the cross-examination of his theory commences. In addition, the *Hippias Major* acknowledges a similar communicative condition. In this dialogue, when Hippias has completed the presentation of his view, Eudias is curious to know why Socrates has fallen silent instead of proceeding to the refutation of his thesis.[163]

In the opening of the *Thaetitus*, furthermore, Euclid, Socrates' student, says that he made short written memos (*ὑπομνήματα*), whilst listening to a discussion of Socrates, which he latter reconstructed based on these notes and on the capacity of his memory (*ἀναμιμνησκόμενος ἔγραφον*). He goes on to add that next time he meets Socrates he will ask him about those points of his presentation, which were unclear to him or for which his memory failed him in order to correct and refine his notes.[164] In *Euthyphro* the philosophical discussion is conducted in a way which resembles modern academic talks, since it is supervised by a panel constituted by Socrates, Euthydemus, and Dionysiodorus.[165]

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[162] Cf. *Parm.* 127c ff. Diogenes Laertius describes a similar method of publication for Alcidamas' book (cf. *Vit. Philos.* 9.54). According to his testimony, Alcidamas himself read out his book at the house of Euripides. Diogenes also tells us that his book was read at the Lyceum by his student Archagoras.

[163] Cf. *Hppias Major* 363a ff. See also Diog. Laert. *Vit. Philos.* 3.35, according to whose testimony Antisthenes invited Plato to the live presentation of his book, the topic of which Plato criticised.

[164] Cf. *Thaet.* 142a ff.

[165] Cf. *Euthyph.* 2a ff.

Plato's testimony helps us illuminate the way in which philosophy was presented in his more philosophically confident days. M. Douglas doubts, however, the reliability of these scenes on grounds that all that is being claimed for them is verisimilitude.[166] Without belittling the important role which imagination plays in Plato's dialogues, it is important to note that there is no serious reason to doubt the validity of Plato's account or to view the information he provides us with wholly as a literary construct. It seems that the setting he chose for his dialogues was only in part a product of his imagination, one that at least had some resonance for the audience, and with which they were to some extent familiar.

We can now discern the basic features of publication which are manifested in the dialogues of Plato. To begin with, it appears that written works were read to the public. The oral presentation of prose appears somewhat problematic to the modern mind, mainly because we are accustomed to reading and digesting large amounts of written material, whereas we cannot process information that is orally communicated to us equally easily and effectively.[167] It does seem, however, that the oral mind had a different capacity in understanding and processing orally delivered accounts.[168]

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[166] Cf. Douglas (1996, p. 151). He also contends that such scenes fail to provide us with the complete picture, since the works of the Sophists and of epideictic oratory were presented in front of a much larger audience than the one of the Platonic dialogues. Douglas also proposes a division between public and private prose. According to his examination, the former includes forensic and deliberative oratory, which was presented to large audiences, while the latter was suitable for presentation to small, but selective, groups in private houses.

[167] Gentili and Ceri have pointed out to the difficulties that the option of oral presentation in cases of more complex prose, say Thucydides, presents us with (1978, p. 140). However, Thomas' more recent analysis has convincingly argued that oral presentation was possible even for works which adopt a more discursive form of presentation (cf. 2000 and 2003).

[168] According to Plato, for example, Hippias could memorise fifty names after having heard them once (cf. *Hipp. maj*. 285e).

It is also possible that some members of the audience were meticulous enough to keep notes of the account presented to them, which they would consult at some later stage. It also becomes apparent that the setting of these dialogues is both public (e.g. *Crito*, *Phaedo*, *Euthyphro*, *Lysis*, and *Charmides*) and private (e.g. *Symposium*, *Gorgias*, *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*). This in turn implies that Plato accepted both the public and the private sphere as two equally suitable contexts of communication. It is worthy of note, however, that even in the dialogues which are staged at some public place the spirit with which the philosophical discussion is carried out is characterised by intimacy. The Platonic dialogues, that is to say, in both cases illustrate an explicitly or implicitly private form of communication.[169] They frequently mention a gathering of persons (*συνουσία*), who are personally acquainted with one another. Those who participate in these gatherings, furthermore, have a student-teacher relationship. They collaborate in this fixed context of studentship in order to examine the reliability of personal assumptions about a specific topic of discussion and in order to acquire in this way high-status knowledge. It is also this kind of civic interaction which they brand as "philosophy".

In order to achieve this philosophy-orientated aim the oral presentation was followed by a cross-examination of the account published. At this stage of oral delivery members of the audience could either require further clarifications from the speaker or they could object to the reliability of his views. It is also at this stage that the author-speaker was given the opportunity to elaborate or defend his case.

Plato's description of the communicative situation of his time shows that philosophy taught mainly through oral presentation, which took the form

[169] For a similar suggestion, see von Reden & Goldhill (1999, pp. 265-6). According to their interpretation, the contrast between the private and the semi-private setting of the dialogues constitutes the dialogues as a form of performance in exile

of a lecture (*διδασκαλία*). This is also revealed in that according to Plato readers always remain *δοξόσοφοι*, whereas listeners are more likely to become *σοφοί*.[170] With this distinction Plato differentiation between those who have some knowledge of doctrine, which they do not nonetheless fully comprehend, from those who have a more substantial understanding of an account. The key difference between these two cases is that in the latter the account is explained to the audience by the author himself, for which reason it less likely that they will misunderstand the major points of his argument. It is important to note that Plato does not belittle the importance of writing in general. Quite on the contrary, he appears to be at pains to stress the necessity of oral presentation in a society, in which books are certainly easier to obtain. In the process of acquiring knowledge, that is to say, Plato considered it vital that the audience was guided by the author himself at a live presentation of his book. Plato's testimony is important, because it reflects the dynamics inherent in a system of communication, which is neither fully literate nor fully oral. It also depicts the interactive relationship between written texts and oral presentation in the process of publication.

What followed the public reading of a work is perhaps the most important information, which Plato provides. Plato's testimony reveals to us that during the live presentation of a text to the public the new ideas or views suggested were subject to discussion. This feature of the system of communication accords with our knowledge of the competitive spirit, which dominated Greek intellectual life. It becomes apparent, furthermore, that philosophy was a question of discussing openly personally held beliefs, and that it was considered to be the product of the citizens' free interaction in society.[171] As G. Lloyd has observed, a gradual shift occurred from the private

[170] Cf. *Phdr.* 275b.

[171] The important role which civil interaction played in the circulation of ideas is also suggested by Aristotle's view that despotism in Persia seeks to alienate the citizens

place of the symposium to the public sphere, where public presentation was by default carried out in a strongly competitive atmosphere. In his view, furthermore, it was this public and competitive nature of Greek life, the cardinal element which brought about the development of Greek thought and science.[172]

We can now discern the basic features of Presocratic presentation. To begin with, the early cosmologies of the Presocratics display a continuity between the two types of publication, which lyric poetry and the epos made available. The content of the ideas which they seek to divulge and the conditions which they set forward for their communication encourage the impression that they were addressed to small gatherings, as in the case of lyric poetry, despite however their use of the popular hexameter, which *prima facie* would perhaps suggest a more public occasion for the presentation. At the same time, however, it seems generally safe to accept that these works did not exclude specific members of the public from such gatherings, although personal acquaintance played perhaps an important role.

This possibility appears more plausible, when taking into consideration that at that time the activity of "cosmologising" was unregistered as a particular topic of discussion and concern, something which would require an orientation towards a specialised, and thus clearly defined, audience. It is equally possible that the Presocratics announced in the Agora the presentation of their works, and that this announcement circulated in the *polis* through a word of mouth. They would in this way reach out for a far

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from one another in order to hinder in this way the articulation and the discussion of ideas, which can potentially harm the stability of the institution (cf. *Politics*, 1313b). It is also worthy of note that even in the classical times philosophy was not considered a professional activity but a *σχόλασις*. This might as well be because in the case of more practical types of authority the distribution of labour makes it easier for society to decide the limits of the authority of each class (cf. e.g. the *δημιοεργοί* list (ϱ 383-4), but also Solon fr. 13.43 ff.).

[172] Cf. Lloyd (1987, pp. 70-91, and p. 108).

wider public from the closed circle of their personal acquaintances. Quite naturally, however, it seems hard to accept that the uneducated lot would take much interest in such presentations of cosmology, for which reason it is wiser to assume that these works were presented to an audience of aristocrats, who had the leisure, and perhaps the necessary background knowledge, to give their attention to such presentations.[173]

As far as the place at which Presocratic cosmologies were presented is concerned, this is perhaps the most difficult question to be resolved, especially when considering that the textual evidence which survives does not explicitly point towards a fixed setting or occasion for communication. One possible explanation for this is that cosmological discussion is not yet supported by an institutionalised system of publication, as in the case of oracles or as in the case of the philosophical schools of the classical age. In the times during which Presocratic cosmologies were perceived and communicated, there existed no organised schools which would harbour and encourage cosmological discussion. Any suggestion thus about the setting which authorised the performance of Presocratic cosmologies is a question of making the most probable conjecture. Yet the most plausible answer seems to be that of private houses, since the noise in the Agora would presumably render the attentive listening, which such accounts require, impossible.[174]

In the previous section we have already pointed out to the fact that the nature of the communication in Greek society remained throughout the archaic and the classical age essential oral despite the appearance of writing as a medium for recording information. The advent of writing had a considerable bearing upon the content of the ideas and it affected to a

[173] For the suggestion that the Seven Sages often had a high-status audience, see Martin (1993, p. 116). It seems reasonable to envisage a similar audience for the Presocratics.

[174] As described in the opening of Plato's *Theaetetus*.

considerable extent the way in which the individual conceptualised, but it did not revolutionise the manner of presentation itself. The standard way of publishing new ideas, that is to say, required that the text was delivered orally to the public. This method of publication is affirmed by the surviving Presocratic fragments, which describe their communicative occasion in terms of *λέγειν* and of *ἀκούειν*.[175] It is with the opening of Heraclitus' work that we come across the more discursive expression *διηγεῦμαι*, which may perhaps suggest *also* an audience of readers.[176] It is possible, furthermore, to interpret as an indication of oral communication the frequent choice of the hexameter by the early cosmologists, which facilitated, due to its memorability, live presentation. As Lloyd pointed out, this choice also reflects the continuity of authoritative expression but also the centrality of poetry, of live performance namely, in the archaic Greek culture.[177]

At the same time, however, it seems safe to accept that the Presocratics also made some use of writing in their composition. W. Harris has maintained that the Presocratic works were written and that writing was a subsidiary part of establishing the status of authority, to which these individuals laid a claim.[178] It does seem, furthermore, that the advent of writing encouraged a more critical reception of existing authorities, such as Homer and Hesiod, and that it brought about a demand for the investigation of new questions but also the refinement or innovation of existing tradition.[179] The Presocratics, that is,

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[175] For a list of these textual indications, see Table V in the Appendix.

[176] Cf. B1. It is interesting to compare Hecataeus' equivalent *γράφω* in his introductory fragment (FGrH, fr. 1).

[177] Cf. Lloyd (1987, p. 113).

[178] Cf. Harris (1989, pp. 63-4). However, he is not exactly right when he later takes the use of writing alone to imply a claim to an authoritative status, mainly because the use of writing was not central to the process of publication as this view implies (*ibid.*, p. 90).

[179] As Goody and Watt have maintained, it is generally easier to perceive the contradictions inherited in accounts in a society, in which individuals make more frequent use of reading (1963).

confronted tradition with a critical mind because they perceived their ideas partly as a response to an existing tradition of views about the world, which were most commonly expressed in epic poetry. As far as the audience is concerned, furthermore, C. Johnstone rightly points out to the fact that the oral mind is characterised by a tendency to please and to preserve a tale, whereas the literate has the privilege of regarding an account critically and objectively.[180]

However, it is important to distinguish at this point that Presocratic presentation does not imply a stage of fully developed literacy. The Presocratic works were perhaps read in public but they were not commonly read by the public. We should be thus careful to avoid accepting the misleading assumption that these works, because of the more critical stance which they adopt, suggest a literate stage of communication. G. Collins, for example, has recently maintained that Greek philosophy developed as a literary discourse and that for this reason it needed no public communication.[181] Such a view seems to exaggerate the role of writing in the dissemination of ideas. As noted already, writing weakened the dependence of the circulation of a composition on oral presentation, albeit it did not completely remove its centrality. Havelock's analysis has convincingly shown that the Presocratics still composed under circumstances of audience control, and that their presentation was only in part assisted by writing.[182]

It is thus preferable to avoid the implications which a purely literate system of communication carries when discussing the nature of Presocratic publication. To assume that the Presocratic works addressed exclusively a

[180] Cf. Johnstone (2009, pp. 39-40). See also Lord (1960, p. 131), according to whom a reading public has a different taste from that of a traditional and un-literate audience, and it demands new themes or the twist of the traditional ones.
[181] Cf. Collins (2004, p. 542).
[182] Cf. Havelock (1982, p. 233). According to his interpretation, the Presocratics move forwards towards literacy and at the same time backwards towards pre-literacy, and their style reflects this ambivalence.

reading public is tantamount to disregarding the oral nature of archaic communication and the continuity between the oral and written method of transmission. It appears that the Presocratic works were presented to the public by the individual who composed them and not by a specialist, as in the case of the professional rhapsodes or the itinerant seers. It also seems that the individual who perceived a new theory about the cosmos was personally responsible for its circulation, since there did not exist a circle of students, who would perpetuate or refine the cosmological tradition, which their teacher introduced. As the same time, however, it is only reasonable to assume that *some* of the upper-class citizens had access to the written version of these works. It is impossible to explain that cosmological theorising appeared as a geographically dispersed activity, unless we assume that there was an ongoing exchange of ideas, which was further encouraged by the book trade.[183]

Furthermore, Lloyd has made a promising suggestion about the way in which later philosophy was presented, which helps us acquire some further insight into the nature of Presocratic publication. He has proposed that the philosophical works of the classical age were communicated in a manner parallel to that of oratory. He has drawn attention to the fact that the stages of rhetorical preparation and presentation might perhaps reflect the stages followed in the presentation of philosophy.[184] In addition, Hershbell has maintained that the presentation of prose rhetoric retained some of the

[183] For this reason Walker envisaged Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles as itinerant bards, who recited publicly their works, like Hesiod (2000, p. 22). It should be noted, however, that Walker does not altogether interpret the authority of these thinkers as rhapsodic; he simply relates these two modes of publication.

[184] Cf. Lloyd (1987, pp. 124-5). See also Pownall in Cooper (2007, p. 240), for the way in which Isocrates sought to educate future political leaders through the reading and discussion of his works in private contexts.

fundamental features of orality such as memorization, improvisation, and oral delivery.[185]

According to these stages, the orator memorised a written version of his speech prior to his oral delivery. The important aspect of this kind of presentation is that performance did not only include a by heart recitation of the speech but also an on the spot improvisation and elaboration of the published *logos*. For this reason repetitive performances of the text were necessary, because they contributed in enriching the content and form of the text and made it more attractive to the audience. The example thus of public oratory shows that the live performances of texts fostered improvisation and spontaneity. The centrality of improvisation in oratory is revealed in Philostratus' testimony that Gorgias accused Prodicus of delivering speeches which were *ἑωλά* and *πολλάκις εἰρημένα*, and were thus deprived from originality. Gorgias contrasted his personal creativity to Philostratus' lack of imagination, which was based upon that he followed the lead of instant inspiration (*καιρός*). Gorgias' criticism of Prodicus is focused on that he simply read out his works and he did not engage in a more creative presentation.[186]

It appears then that improvisation was an important aspect of publication in both Greek oratory and for Plato. In the examination of writing in the previous section, we have noted its use as a mnemonic aid for whatever was orally communicated. We have also pointed out that the texts were used as a guide for live presentation.[187] The immediate implication of this is that this mode of presentation allowed for much freedom in the reception of an

[185] Cf. Hershbell (1968, p. 187).

[186] Cf. Philostr. *Vit. Sophist.* 1.483. To this we might add the testimony of Diogenes Laertius that Protagoras and Prodicus of Ceos made money from reading their works in public (*λόγους ἀναγιγνώσκοντες ἠρανίζοντο*, *Vit. Philos.* 9.50).

[187] Cf. also Lloyd (1987, p. 127), according to whom texts were used as aide-memoirs for what was more accurately propagated through living performance from the teacher himself.

account. This occurred however in the discussion which followed the live presentation of a text, during which the audience could interact with the author either by asking for clarifications or by criticising his views.

The very content of the surviving Presocratic fragments encourage the impression that their presentation occurred in a similar atmosphere of critical discussion and debate. The element of on the spot improvisation upon an existing text suggests that the fragments which are at our disposal do not actually account for the complete picture of Presocratic presentation, and that they reveal only partial information about the nature of the publication of these first cosmologies. The advantage of this conjecture is that it can perhaps provide a possible explanation for the apparently dogmatic and un-argued for authoritative presentation of the Presocratics under examination.[188] A reason for this feature of Presocratic presentation might be that this was expected to occur in the discussion which followed the "dogmatic" reading of the text, but which is nonetheless for us irretrievably lost.

4) The question of categorisation

It may be with much reason doubted, whether it is permissible to speak about a Presocratic "group", especially when taking into consideration the flexibility of intellectual categories of authority in the archaic age. Before proceeding to the examination of this question, it is necessary to make a clarification. This analysis does not opt out the existing term "Presocratic", mainly because it refers to a conventional a set of thinkers, and it thus has some sense for the reader. The need for the keeping of this term arises from that the accounts of these thinkers display *some* common features despite their apparent dissimilarities, which would be unwise to overlook. It should be noted however that this term refers *only* to the thinkers here examined, and

[188] So according to Curd (1998).

that it is not used in order to imply, let alone to accept, the kind of authority normally recognised as "Presocratic".

The reader may also notice that the current examination is focused exclusively upon four major figures. In this way it perhaps fails to provide a more general analysis of Presocratic authority, as the title of the thesis promises. However, the selection of these thinkers is based upon two criteria: chronology and the extent of surviving textual evidence.

The amount of the textual evidence is important for this scope of analysis, because this examination does not aim in the investigation of the authoritative perspective of early Greek cosmological speculation based on the way in which it was received by ancient tradition and modern scholarship. It is concerned rather with the indications of authority, which can be deducted from the fragments, and which permit a more probable reconstruction of the authoritative perspective of each individual thinker. Such indications are important because they reveal to us the way in which these first cosmologists conceived, published, and affirmed their personal authority in public. For this reason it is vital that the material examined is of a length that allows the making of moderately safe conclusions. Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles are admittedly not the only representatives of early cosmological speculation. They are the only ones, however, from whom we have the larger amount of direct evidence for their authoritative claims. It is for this reason, furthermore, that Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Zeno do not receive a detailed examination in this analysis. The number and extent of their fragments is limited and less easy to place in an appropriate context of authority.

The second criterion used in the choice of these thinkers is that of chronology. The thinkers thus examined in this analysis range from mid 6th to mid 5th century BC, and it is for this reason that Anaxagoras and Democritus are excluded from this analysis. The justification for the choice of this period

is that the rise of sophistry, medicine, in late 5th century, but also the philosophical activity of Plato reflect a more clear understanding and division of disciplines as distinct areas of interest and concern, something which does not apply in the case of the four thinkers examined. It seems, that is to say, that the appearance of the sophists and of the Hippocratics was a decisive factor for the development of specialised differentiation in terms of the authoritative prestige claimed.

One possible explanation for this is that these domains of individual activity correspond to needs which are of a practical nature, and for this reason their difference from other types of authority is easier to perceive. The doctors, that is to say, were socially important provided that they applied their art in order to cure their patients, whereas the sophists were considered skilful experts insofar as they could impart to their students the art of persuasion. These two types of authority thus contributed largely in the establishment of a relatively more rigid distribution of areas of authoritative concern. Their activity brought about a more diverse but also more accurately defined and self-conscious scope of authority, since the social efficacy of their expertise could be easily determined.

It is important to clarify at this point the rationale for grouping these four thinkers together in this examination, given that it seems highly unlikely that they perceived themselves as members of a separate group. These thinkers are dealt with as a single case of authority, because they apparently display *some* uniformity in what they understand as their mission in society. They all seek to provide, that is to say, a plausible and meaningful answer to the same question about the constitution of the cosmos or, to put it slightly differently, of the *physis*. They thus give the impression that they share the same area of cosmological concern, which they perceive in connection with their personal claims to an authoritative status.

However, it is only fair to point out that this is not say that their accounts provide conclusive evidence for cosmology as a *specialised* activity. This is so because these four Presocratics are transitional figures, and this analysis is concerned exactly with throwing some light upon the way in which Presocratic speculation advanced from existing types of individual authority (e.g. the epic poets and diviners) to a novel, but yet undifferentiated as such, type of activity, which deserves a prominent position in society, and which was much later branded "philosophy". This does not imply that these early cosmologists were, strictly speaking, "philosophers", but only that the conditions which they set forward for the acquisition of knowledge and the method which they appear to apply to some extent anticipate the general features of the philosophical activity of the classical age. In other words, if we do wish to trace a common line of development in Greek thought starting with the Presocratics, then it seems only natural to acknowledge that the kind of activity which is most conspicuously relevant to theirs was actually that of classical philosophy.

Yet their accounts cannot be with much comfort labelled as "philosophical" either, at least not so according to our modern understanding of philosophy. The problem which arises, if we opt for this view of Presocratic authority, is that the nature of their inquiry bears striking similarities with the scientific activity of physics, while at the same time it verges, due to its reflective quality, on philosophy. In fact, the specific kind of authority claimed by the early cosmologists is so hard to decide exactly because their material may be viewed as examples of philosophical physics or of natural philosophy at best. All the same, it is hard to miss that they have a different orientation in the reconstruction of an authoritative identity from these disciplines.

At the same time, it is of some sense to ask whether a strict differentiation of types of authority was an active option at the time when

Presocratic cosmologies appeared. Our previous examination of the kind of authority claimed by the epic poets and by individual diviners has suggested that archaic age was a period which did not particularly favour a clear distinction between various types of authority. It was also a period during which activities which laid a claim to an authoritative status were not distinctively separated from one another by fixed borders. For this reason it was quite frequent that the responsibility of an activity extended over a sphere of influence, which the representatives of this particular activity did not exactly pronounce as their primary concern. This becomes apparent, for instance, from the way in which the content of the knowledge of the epic poet sometimes overlaps, when viewed from our vantage point, with that of the seer. In a similar fashion, the professional activity of the seer could occasionally overlap with that of the doctor, insofar as his clients often consulted him in order to resolve an epidemic or to cure a disease. This flexibility in the categorisation of authority is difficult for the modern mind to perceive, mainly because our age has developed a more rigid understanding of classifications. We now distinguish clearly, that is, between different areas of knowledge, which are attached to specific functions of the human mental capacity.

In examining the particular nature of the kind of authority affirmed by the Presocratics it is important to remark that, as André Laks argues, there are two possible ways of establishing an authoritative status in connection with differentiation: either the individual differentiates his expertise from other dissimilar authorities (*external differentiation*) or he differentiates *himself* from other similar authorities, who appear to belong to the same group (*inner-differentiation*).[189] It then becomes apparent that the authoritativeness of an enterprise may not be affirmed only in connection with other similar

[189] Cf. Laks (2002, pp. 16-7).

enterprises, for it is equally possible to register a particular area of concern as authoritative by contrasting it to other dissimilar topics of investigation. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to accept that these two stages of differentiation are successive, and that in order for the second to appear the first has to have been to some extent developed. In order for inner differentiation to appear, that is, both the individuals and the audience have to be able to identify the content of the knowledge presented as the primary concern of a specific group.

It seems that in the archaic age it was acceptable to present oneself in contrast to other dissimilar authorities rather than in contrast with other authorities of the same group. This is manifested, for example, in the case of the seer, who appears to practice his art independently from the oracular shrines but also independently from other fellow seers. It appears, furthermore, that Greek lyric adopts a similar posture, since the lyric poets do not commonly launch a direct attack against another lyric poet. At the same time however, they could occasionally claim to present a "better" version of a traditional story. In this case, however, the poet points back to the epic tradition, from which he nonetheless wishes to differentiate himself, as in Stesichorus' palinode.[190] Such cases are an example of external and not of internal differentiation, which would require the objection to a version of a story presented by another poet at the symposium.

On the other hand, it appears that inner competition was fairly frequent within the circle of the epic tradition. As noted already, Hesiod acknowledges the constructive competition amongst individuals, which in his view accompanies poetic composition. It should be kept in mind, however, that Hesiod's testimony refers to an activity, which already has a prestigious

[190] Cf. PMG, fr. 15. For an examination of the way in which Stesichorus treats epic tradition, see Woodbury L. (1967), Maingon A. D. (1978), Beecroft A. J. (2006, pp. 47-69), and Bassi K. (1993, pp. 51-75).

position in society, and which for this reason had reached some level of external differentiation. Competitive inner differentiation was thus in this case possible, even perhaps necessary, for establishing personal authority in performance.

This general characteristic of the archaic age is important, because it provides us with some guidance in understanding the claims to authority which the Presocratics under examination lay. It is true that none of them appears to differentiate himself from other like-minded individual in a direct manner. This *prima facie* suggests that these individuals did not associate themselves with a specific group, which claimed to undertake the same mission in society. However, it has become apparent that inner-differentiation reflects a more developed stage of authoritative identification, which was impossible in the archaic age, during which there were no fixed borders of types of authority or of alternative areas of knowledge.

We can now proceed to interpret the absence of a Presocratic consciousness of cosmologising as a specialised concern in new light. It is possible to assume that the Presocratics under examination, that is to say, give to us the impression that they present their accounts independently from one another, because the general spirit of their age did not dictate to them a strict definition of personal authority in relation with other similar individual authorities. This in turn implies that their audience did not expect a personal statement of authority on such grounds, and it is perhaps for this reason that such a way of self-presentation does not appear in the Presocratic cosmologies.

It is also worthy of note that even when the somewhat more specialised activities of medicine and the art of the sophists appeared, their representatives were at pains to establish their superiority against other contextual authorities and not so much against other individuals with whom they shared the same concerns in terms of establishing their personal

expertise as socially important. It therefore seems that inner differentiation took quite some time to develop in Greek culture. At the same time, external differentiation, which was fairly frequent and which was encouraged by the more general spirit of archaic competition, does to some extent suggest an understanding of one's expertise in connection with a group, the particular knowledge or *techne* of which is nonetheless not yet defined definitely or strictly. It is possible, in other words, to understand the references made to other authorities as an indication of the movement towards new and untried types of authority. Such references admittedly do not outline the specific nature of the new type of authority which is starting to formulate, but they do nonetheless imply some awareness about its distinctive nature.

One might quite reasonably doubt that the presentation of a cosmology was exclusively a Presocratic concern. The immediate implication of this view is that the Presocratic cosmologies cannot be taken to display sighs of external differentiation, and for this reason any attempt to examine them as a group is wrong and unsubstantiated. There is indeed much reason in this objection, since it seems that the presentation of a cosmology was not exclusively a Presocratic concern. Already in the epic tradition, and more specifically in Hesiod's *Theogony*, we find the attempt to conceive of a world view. In addition, it seems that in mid 5th century the general demand for the examination of the cosmos rose, something which is partly reflected in the appearance of the Ionian historiographers. It therefore becomes apparent that by the time when Presocratic cosmologies were disclosed the Greek audiences were to some extent familiar with questions of a very broadly cosmological nature. At the same time, however, it is vital to discern the novelty, which the Presocratics introduced in cosmologising, and which distinguishes their accounts from those of the poets and from the accounts of the Ionian historiographers.

To begin with, this is an issue which cannot be easily tackled, mainly because the discussion of the cosmos is a rather broad topic, and for this reason it is not always easy to determine its fundamental principles or to specify the particular borders of this area of investigation. It can be generally said that a cosmology may also encompass a comprehensive worldview according to which the individual orients himself and his behaviour, and which for this reason has a normative force and value. This field covers what is now known as "natural philosophy", but it can also provide the background for moral directives, such as those implied in poetic cosmologies. The analysis of epic poetry in the previous section has pointed out to its function as a medium for establishing cultural uniformity in society through the presentation of a traditional standard for personal moral action. It is also perhaps natural to encounter cosmological beliefs in works of poetry, even more so in oral cultures, provided, of course, that we are eager to accept that poetry is an activity which is chiefly concerned with the human life. For this reason it does not appear odd that it often deals with questions about human live, which men commonly have. The understanding of the world in which men live, moreover, is one of the very fundamental questions about human existence.

However, Presocratic cosmologies bear two striking differences from the cosmologies disclosed in poetry or in the Ionian historiography. To begin with, it seems that the Presocratics were the first to introduce cosmology as a major question to be investigated in their presentation. The claims to an authoritative status, which they lay, furthermore, apparently indicate that the superior truth which they divulged into their community was understood in connection with their cosmological remarks. It appears that the Presocratics under examination are primarily concerned with publicising a coherent worldview. This seems to be the case also when they discuss topics, which do not normally agree with the character of cosmological speculation. Yet it is

hard to miss that even in this case their cosmological beliefs are appropriated to this different purpose. It seems, that is to say, that the various observations which they submit on other un-cosmological topics are an extension of their basic cosmological assumptions.[191] Seen in this light, it seems that these observations are not only a further practical application but also a further illustration of their cosmology. In poetry and in the case of the Ionian historiography on the other hand, cosmological beliefs occur with such an unsystematic fashion that it makes it hard to accept that the individual prioritises their examination in his publication.

It is possible to trace two further differences between the Presocratic and the epicopoetic or historiographic cosmologies. Firstly, it seems that cosmological knowledge is not pursued in the same way, and secondly its content does not have an essentially similar quality in all of these cases. Interestingly enough, the Presocratics proceed in their presentation to set *also* the conditions for acquiring insight into the true nature of the world. This characteristic of their accounts stands in direct opposition to poetic inspiration, which was considered, both by the individual and by his audience, as a substantial guarantee for the reliability of his insights. Ionian historiography appears to employ a somewhat more "scientific" method, at least so in comparison to epic poetry. Its method consists, however, in evaluating the information which the individual had collected during his travelling. The functionality of this method resides in the ability of the individual to present a record for the variety of ideas which were current at different cities across Greece. It therefore becomes apparent that there is a certain disparity between the methods used in these cases of authority.

It also seems that poetic and historiographic cosmologies generally have a different quality. These accounts still explain the cosmos in

[191] This was also because for the Greeks wisdom was the possession of a kind of knowledge which proves itself in a practical way (cf. e.g., Frede (2000), p.7).

mythological terms and in terms of divine interference. The Presocratic cosmological proposals under examination on the other hand reveal an attempt to de-personalise the world order. In these accounts the governing supremacy of the gods is substituted by a "governing" material principle or principles.[192] In the Presocratic cosmologies under examination, furthermore, the validity of divine genealogy is replaced by the description of a standard and recurrent process through which the cosmos is *always* generated and destructed. This cosmic process is periodical and time-proof, and for this reason it never ceases to influence the way in which the cosmos is constituted.

This notion is notably absent from poetic cosmologies, which generally refer exclusively to past cosmic events and which never transcend this temporal grade. It then becomes apparent that the Presocratic accounts present us with a unique feature, which is not attested in other attempts to cosmologise; they transcended not only observable ordinary experience but also time. This in turn implies that they had a more speculative quality, and that they display *some* degree of specialisation in their undertaking. Poetic and historiographic cosmologies on the other hand do not generally have reflective overtones, and they do not consider the ability of mental apprehension as similarly important in obtaining knowledge about the cosmos. It then seems that the Presocratic cosmologies are distinguished from those of their predecessors in several crucial aspects.

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[192] Aristotle thus thought that the Presocratics were distinguished from their predecessors in that they were in search of the *ἀρχαί*, i.e. first material principles (*Metaph.* 983b ff.). It is worthy of note that for Aristotle philosophy *is* the search of the first principles (*Phys*. 185b 15 ff.) According to his view, moreover, Thales was the originator of this new mode of thinking, but of course it is highly unlikely that Thales was the founder of a philosophical school. Cf. Frede (2000, p. 6) and Hankinson (1995, p. 436). At any event, Thales' contribution consists in the fact that he apparently adopted a less mythological outlook in his cosmology. Cf. Hatab (1990, pp. 162-3), Johnstone (2009, pp. 43-4), Martin (1993, pp. 113-4), Popper (1958-9, pp. 4-6), and Kirk (1962, pp. 326-7).

5) Early uses of "φιλοσοφία"

It is interesting for the scope of this analysis to examine the sense with which the word *φιλοσοφία* occurs in non-Presocratic texts. This will help us throw some light upon the particular characteristics of this enterprise, and to trace some possible associations or dissimilarities with the essential features of the Presocratic accounts under examination. It is generally accepted in modern scholarship that *φιλοσοφία* was not used as technical term before Plato. This issue was firstly introduced to scholarly discussion by W. Burkert, who has with much reason argued that the understanding of *φιλοσοφία* as "theoretical knowledge" originates in 4th century and, more specifically, with Plato's Academy.[193]

It cannot be doubted that the technical sense of *φιλοσοφία* starts officially with Plato.[194] However, its earlier uses, although unspecified and relatively vague, apparently reinforce the impression that Plato did not coin the word in order to describe his personal intellectual undertakings. It seems rather that he was the first to *develop* a special meaning and to affirm a specific orientation for this term in such a way that it does not only include a specific area of investigation but it also constitutes a major project and area of concern in man's everyday life.

It therefore seems reasonable to accept that Plato exploited an existing but yet ambiguous term in order to define his personal enterprise, for which he proclaimed specific characteristics and rational conditions. It was on such

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[193] Cf. Burkert (1966, pp. 159-177). So also according to Nightingale (1995, pp. 14-5). Burkert dismisses in his examination as unreliable the testimony of Diogenes Laertius, according to which Pythagoras came up with the term *φιλοσοφία* and was the first to use it in the sense of "theoretical understanding" (1.12; Cf. also DK 58, B15 and Cic. *Tusc*. 5.8-9). Such interpretations are challenged by Laks' very recent study (cf. 2002, esp. p. 11).

[194] For the way in which Plato understood the specialised activity of the philosopher, see analysis below.

grounds, furthermore, that he tried to attract public attention and interest in his works. This could not have been to the same extent effective, if *φιλοσοφία* bore no connotations at all for the members of his audience. In addition, it is otherwise difficult to explain the appearance of philosophy as a fully specialised and institutionalised activity with Plato, unless we assume that there is a previous stage, or stages, of development, which little by little contributed towards a more clear and conscious understanding of what *φιλοσοφία* is.

It should be pointed out, however, that this does not necessarily imply that we have to also accept that in this line of progression towards the modern sense of *φιλοσοφία* all stages need to have identical methods, features, and concerns, or to be clearly distinguished from one another. We also do not have to recognise each successive stage as "philosophical". After all, even for Plato the borders between philosophy and other disciplines were not as strictly defined.[195]

It is possible to acquire some insight into the gradual process which generated the way in which *φιλοσοφία* was used and understood by Plato from its first occurrences. The Hippocratic author of the *Ancient Medicine* uses the word in a context which suggests his understanding of *φιλοσοφία* as the study of nature in a speculative way. In his view, furthermore, this study is carried out with the purpose of acquiring theoretical knowledge.[196] The crucial significance of this passage, however, lies in that the author explicitly

[195] This becomes apparent from the *Euthydemus*, in which dialogue the sophist is considered a marginal figure, which verges with the philosopher and the politician (cf. 305c6). Plato uses the term *μεθορία*, which acknowledges the loose and rather flexible way of identifying in his times the nature of the authority claimed by charismatic individuals. For a comprehensive examination of this passage, see Laks (2002, p. 13).

[196] Cf. Ch. 20, as in *Phd*. 96a6-8. Interestingly enough, the description of philosophy which Plato provides in the *Phaedo* accords with the basic features of Presocratic cosmologies.

identifies *φιλοσοφία* with the work of Empedocles.[197] It seems, moreover, that he uses the name of Empedocles in order to clarify to his audience the particular type of knowledge that he has in mind, and from which he desires to differentiate his personal expertise.[198]

Another important testimony is found in Gorgias' fragment 11.13. In this fragment the phrase *φιλοσόφων λόγους ἁμίλλας* in specific suggests that Gorgias understands "philosophy" as some sort of dialectic contest.[199] Gorgias possibly has in mind the antagonistic quality of the first cosmologies and the way in which each Presocratic individual presents his personal view with such an apparently dogmatic tone that he considers his account better than those of other individuals.

It then becomes apparent that these early mentions of philosophy appear to acknowledge *some* of the basic features of the Presocratic cosmologies, and that as such they are not completely deprived of significance. They provide us, moreover, with a view of the way in which the Presocratic accounts were received by different and roughly contemporary authorities. It should be pointed out that these testimonies do not suggest an awareness of *φιλοσοφία* as a technical term. At the same time, it seems that they apparently assume that *φιλοσοφία* has some meaning for the audience, the particular features of which remain nonetheless unspecified. Some scholars have argued that such a confusion on the whole accords with the nature of philosophy, which by default includes a rather broad field of

[197] Laks thus interprets this passage as evidence for an early disciplinary conflict (2002, p. 12).

[198] So according to Schiefsky (2005, p. 300), but also according to Jaeger (1946-7, p. 19 n. 40). Schiefsky also points out that the mention of other thinkers is quite rare in the Hippocratic corpus. This in turn underlines the significance of that Empedocles is mentioned by name in a particularly rich in terms of establishing personal authority context.

[199] So according to Laks (*ibid*.)

competence.[200] These references, furthermore, do not help us determine the particular characteristics of the role of the *φιλόσοφος*, the authoritative status of whom is not associated with a specialised enterprise.

The early mentions of *φιλοσοφία* reinforce this impression that the first cosmologists, i.e. those who put forward an understanding of the constitution of the world, did not have a clearly defined role in society. The differentiation between what was regarded as "philosophy" and what not in the archaic times, furthermore, is all the more difficult to decide because at this stage no activity has been yet properly branded as philosophical. In addition, at this stage there are no disciplines but just individuals who practice their art and display their expertise sporadically and by no fixed standards or methods. However, it does seem that a common pattern is beginning to emerge, to which these early uses of *φιλοσοφία* implicitly acknowledge.

It is noteworthy that the mentions of *φιλοσοφία* before Plato are located in a strongly authoritative context, which recognises *φιλοσοφία* as an area, by all means still vague and blur, of expertise. It is also striking that these diverse sources which acknowledge, either implicitly or explicitly, the existence of *φιλοσοφία* describe it in terms which are confirmed by the content of the surviving Presocratic fragments. Yet it is only plain to see that

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[200] Cf. Laks (2002, p. 13 and p. 15). Moore on the other hand has maintained that "philosophy" gives a description of the whole universe. However, it is not necessary to appropriate our philosophical standards in order to excuse the Presocratics from that they are not as "philosophical" as we would normally expect (1953, p. 23). According to Most, moreover, philosophy is a way of life (2003, p. 305). Yet one can easily object that a way of life is not always "philosophy". Jordan holds that philosophy is decided by the nature of the response given to a question, i.e. by the criteria and conditions held as valid for acquiring knowledge (1990, p. 8 and p. 12). It seems a fair bet to assume, together with Laks, that philosophy is a human activity, the borders of which are more open from those of other disciplines. The reason for this is that philosophy, generally speaking, deals mainly with the interpretation and evaluation of visual or perceptible experience, but it also defines and determines the relation, role, and the way in which the individual is expected to correspond to this interpretation. For this reason it is only natural that its range often includes various fields of human activity such as, most obviously, that of morality.

all these authorities do not recognise the same authoritative quality in this activity. This is easily explained however when taking into consideration that the particular feature which is singled out in these testimonies is appropriated to the personal authoritative claims of the author. The early references to philosophy thus take full advantage of the inherent flexibility of its borders in order to clarify the background against which their personal authoritative expertise will be defined. In order to do so they select and exploit the implications of that particular aspect of "philosophy", which most evidently in their view approximates their personal undertaking. For this reason, it is not unexpected to find that *φιλοσοφία* is for Gorgias a dialectic and argumentative contest, for the Hippocratic author the theoretical study of the human *physis*, and later for Plato plain theorising.

It seems, that is to say, that these authors use this term as a point of reference in their presentation, and from which they will nonetheless proceed to differentiate themselves, in the same spirit perhaps with which the Presocratics often contrast themselves to the authority of the poets. In these early uses, *φιλοσοφία* designates a special activity insofar as it clarifies the context within which authority will be competently pursued. It thus establishes the common ground, which is recognisable by the audience and it therefore addresses a tradition, in relation to which individual identity will be finally constructed and defined.

The importance therefore of these early uses of *φιλοσοφία* lies in that they suggest that for these individuals Presocratic cosmologies have already formed a preceding tradition, which these authors receive however as outsiders. It therefore becomes apparent that these mentions of *φιλοσοφία* are scarcely reliable when it comes to defining the specific authoritative quality of Presocratic cosmologies, since their author is not concerned with providing a definition for this kind of activity in the first place. They are particularly valuable however insofar as they reflect the way in which the Presocratics

were understood by authorities of a different kind, but also their reputation in antiquity. What is important in these references is that this late 5th century authors considered the Presocratics as a group which had established some sort of tradition by registering a set of authoritative concerns. It also becomes apparent that for these dissimilar authorities *φιλοσοφία* retains one basic element, which is a speculative quality but also value. We need not necessarily agree with them on this, but the point here is that the Presocratics were acknowledged at some later time by other authorities as a distinct group, the members of which had the same aim in their presentation.

It is interesting to examine whether it is possible to trace a continuity between Plato's institutionalised notion of *φιλοσοφία* and the sense in which it was understood by Gorgias and the author of the Hippocratic treatise. In this way it will appear more reasonable to ask whether it is possible to trace a common line of development of *φιλοσοφία* according to the information provided by these testimonies. Of course, it is impossible to offer here an in depth examination of what is philosophy for Plato and Aristotle, which goes way beyond the interest of this analysis.

Plato understood philosophy as the love for knowledge and, more specifically, for that kind of knowledge which includes theoretical study,[201] and which is contrasted to the emotions[202] and to practical affairs.[203] Plato identified this true knowledge, furthermore, with the transcendence of visually observable reality, which in his view could only be accomplished through the practice of one's personal mental capacity.[204] Aristotle provided an even more specialised definition of philosophy. He understood philosophy

[201] Cf. *Gorg*. 484d.
[202] Cf. *Phd.* 68c.
[203] Cf. *Gorg*. *ibid*.
[204] Cf. *Resp*. 475d-480a.

as the knowledge of the first principles and causes of things, from which everything else can be known.[205]

It becomes apparent that the knowledge of philosophy is for Plato and Aristotle the product of a purely intellectual effort. At the same time, there is no compelling reason to accept that every case of philosophical knowledge has to be perceived through a process which does not involve the senses. It is equally possible that the latter can be obtained through a critical evaluation of the information which they provide. The testimonies of the Hippocratic author and Gorgias confirm the theoretical quality of *φιλοσοφία* before Plato and Aristotle. It then becomes apparent that in all these cases of *φιλοσοφία* the ability to speculate upon a certain topic and to substantiate a way of understanding is of cardinal importance but also the common element in the development of the notion of *φιλοσοφία*.

This suggestion should not be taken to imply, however, the view that the Presocratics under examination claimed for themselves the status of the *φιλόσοφος* in their society. Such an assumption disregards the flexibility and dynamic interaction between dissimilar archaic categories, as well as the specialty of their desire to indicate a new orientation, which is not yet wholly disentangled, and thus not clearly differentiated, from preceding tradition. However, the particularities and distinctive character of Presocratic authority reveal themselves more reliably in the surviving fragments, to which we shall now turn.

[205] Cf. *Metaph.* 982 a-b. It is noteworthy that for Aristotle the asking of questions central for the development of philosophy.

ἄδει δὲ τοῦτον τῷ θεῷ
ἐν συνοχῇ καρδίας
Michael Psellus, *Poem*. 1.171

Chapter II: Xenophanes

When Xenophanes published his poems, he entered this scene of undecided categorisation of personal expertise. Xenophanes presents us with a special case, mainly because his poems reflect this peculiarity of his times. It is for this reason difficult to grasp the precise quality of his authoritative perspective, exactly because his works reveal an interest in multiple topics, but also because his poems display conspicuous differences in terms of style and of authoritative posture. Xenophanes' tone of voice thus varies from that normally adopted in standard sympotic poetry to epistemological remarks and cosmological reflections.[1]

The immediate implication of this is that Xenophanes is hailed in modern scholarship either as the pioneer of philosophical thinking or he is wholly dismissed from the authoritative status of the philosopher.[2] In order to investigate the particular nature of the claims he lays to a superior status, however, it is important to examine the kind of identity which Xenophanes wishes to adopt in his presentation, and which was all the more difficult to obtain in an age of no fixed categories or groups of individual authority.

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[1] For this reason Xenophanes is the only Presocratic, the works of whom are printed in both lyric anthologies (e.g. Campbell (1967), Adrados (1956), and Bergk (1878)) as well as in editions of early cosmologies (e.g. DK).

[2] Ancient authors on the other hand do not question Xenophanes' value as a philosopher. They often consider him the founder of the Eleatic School (cf. Clem. *Strom* I 64, Pl. *Soph.* 242d, and Theodoret. *Graec. affect. curat.* 4.5) and a *φυσικός* (cf. Euseb. *Praep. evang.* 10.14.14, and Stob. *Geog.* XIV). It is highly unlikely that this is true, since in Xenophanes' age different types of expertise, especially of philosophy, were not yet clearly differentiated.

1. Xenophanes as a "rhapsode" and his response to the epic tradition

K. Reinhardt has made the suggestion that Xenophanes' authoritative perspective should be understood as that of the rhapsode.[3] This impression is further reinforced by the fact that Xenophanes composed also hexameters, but also from Diogenes Laertius' testimony, according to which Xenophanes *ἐρραψώιδει τὰ ἑαυτοῦ*.[4] There are, however, numerous reasons why it is wiser to avoid accepting that Xenophanes shared the same status of authority with the rhapsodes.

To begin with, it is not exactly beyond any shadow of doubt that in Diogenes Laertius' times the verb *ῥαψωιδῶ* was used in the sense of "reciting verses in the fashion of a rhapsode". Diogenes Laertius probably means to say that Xenophanes used to recite in front of a live audience the verses he composed. This assumption accords with our knowledge of the standard way in which new ideas were communicated in Greece's semi-literate culture, in

[3] Cf. Reinhardt (1916, p. 126), followed by Gigon (1945, p. 126). Reinhardt argues that Xenophanes' status as a rhapsode is manifested in his mention of *μνημοσύνη* in B1.20. See also, Defradas (1962, p. 361), who nonetheless associates *μνημοσύνη* with Pythagoreanism. However, it is noteworthy that Xenophanes does position *μνημοσύνη* in the core of his claims to a superior status and of his concerns. He simply says that it is a virtuous quality that one can possibly have. According to Reinhardt's examination, furthermore, Xenophanes has the repertoire of a "fahrender Sänger" (p. 133). This is true for his elegies, whilst it cannot be claimed with the same certainty for his hexameters, which obviously deal with a different set of questions. Reinhardt also takes the *τόνος* of the same line to imply Xenophanes' skill in composing competent verses (*ibid*.). Xenophanes' use of the medium of the poets is discussed further below. *Contra* Reinhardt's suggestion, see Adkins (1985, p. 185).

[4] Cf. Diog. Laert. IX.18.

which the individual was responsible for the live presentation of his compositions.[5]

It is possible to interpret in different light Xenophanes' choice of the hexameter. His preference for the same medium as the poets does not necessarily imply his desire to identify himself with their authoritative position in society. The medium, that is, is unable to account, when taken alone, for the nature of the authority claimed by the individual. It can suggest a particular type of authority, however, when it bears an essential function and when it constitutes a crucial aspect of the expertise which the individual wishes to display to his audience in his performance.

In addition, Xenophanes might have chosen the medium of verse, because it can more adequately correspond to the demands of live presentation and of the oral transmission of ideas. It should be kept in mind that prose was not yet fully developed, and also that there was no standard medium for the kind of knowledge which Xenophanes presents. At this stage of undeveloped specialisation the epic hexameter was still a highly esteemed medium of expression.

Furthermore, the rhapsode is, strictly speaking, a professional specialist, who acquires his prestige and reputation by reciting verses from epic poems.[6] He presents in his performance a traditional set of topics, but also of themes and ideas, from which he is not at the liberty to stray far. The rhapsode is restrained in that his composition is required to sound familiar with what the audience expects to hear. He recounts an episode from the

[5] Cf. Campbell (1983, p. 331), Jaeger (1967, p. 40), KRS (1983, p. 164), and Gomperz (1943, p. 155). For the interaction between written text and live performance, see in the introduction.

[6] Heidel on the other hand is maintains that Xenophanes is a rhapsode in this strict sense, which he does not regard as a contradiction (1943, p. 267). In his conclusion he ranks Xenophanes as a minstrel, although he recognises his exceptional quality (p. 277). This suggestion cannot stand, however, because it does not view the poetry of Xenophanes as a whole.

stories narrated in the epic tradition and, although he does so according to his personal skill or taste thus refining existing tradition, he cannot nonetheless alter considerably the very content of this tradition. One important aspect of his performance is the successful delivery and perpetuation of the Homeric ideals and morality, by which social uniformity is established.[7] In the case of Xenophanes' hexameters on the other hand, it does not seem that they intend to continue and disseminate Homer's reputation and his reliability as an authoritative source of knowledge.

In addition, the element of poetic inspiration is notably absent from Xenophanes' poetry.[8] This appears odd, especially when taking into consideration that the epic poems of Homer and Hesiod rested their authoritativeness upon a knowledge which the individual believed to derive from divine dispensation. And it was this way of self-presentation that the audience of Xenophanes was chiefly familiar with, especially when listening to a poem composed in hexameters.

It is worthy of note, furthermore, that Xenophanes employs in his poems not only the epic hexameter but also the elegiac metre. The rhapsode on the other hand did not normally compose elegies in the same way that a lyric poet did not compose hexameters. At any event, the most serious reason why the authoritative perspective of Xenophanes cannot be identified with that of the rhapsode, is that he launches a criticism against Homer and Hesiod. It would certainly appear surprising to the audience, if a rhapsode attacked the major representatives of epic poetry, the poems of whom he recited in order to gain his personal social recognition.

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[7] For an examination of the educational function of epic poetry, see in the introduction.

[8] For an analysis of poetic inspiration, see in the introduction, but also the examination of fragment B18 below.

Yet it cannot escape our attention that Xenophanes' hexameters immediately place him in the epic tradition. It is interesting to investigate, however, the way in which he views his poetry in connection with the existing tradition of the epos, which was in his time the most widely acknowledged expression of authoritative knowledge. There are however some striking differences between the Xenophanean and the epic hexameters. To begin with, Xenophanes' hexameters are differentiated in one crucial respect. They do not give the impression that they are concerned with the same traditional material normally associated with the epos, since the ideas which they voice have nothing in common with the *content* of the knowledge which epic poetry presents. But Xenophanes in his hexameters displays only a fairly remote connection to Homer's tradition.[9]

This is overtly manifested for example in the following set of fragments:

B27: ἐκ γαίης γὰρ πάντα καὶ εἰς γῆν πάντα τελευτᾶι
B28: γαίης μέν τόδε πεῖρας ἄνω παρὰ ποσσὶν ὁρᾶται
ἠέρι προσπλάζον, τὸ κάτω δ' ἐς ἄπειρον ἱκνεῖται
B29: γῆ καὶ ὕδωρ πάντ' ἔσθ' ὅσα γίνονται ἠδὲ φύονται
B33: πάντες γὰρ γαίης τε καὶ ὕδατος ἐκγενόμεσθα

These fragments reveal Xenophanes' interest in the way in which the human world is constituted. It can be reasonably objected, however, that epic poetry also provided a similar answer. The crucial difference is that it did so either in passing (e.g. Homer) or under the control and limitations of a mythical frame of understanding (e.g. Hesiod). In Xenophanes on the other hand, the question of cosmology is starting to acquire a centrality in the presentation, since it occurs more frequently. His fragment on Iris shows that

[9] This issue is thoroughly examined by Classen (1989). Campbell observes that Xenophanes, like Solon, has the fewer Homeric echoes than the earliest elegiac writers (1983, p. 332). This may perhaps imply Xenophanes' desire to differentiate his poetry from the tradition of the epos.

his mode of perception discards the identification of divinities with the cosmos.[10] It is only reasonable to assume, furthermore, that the actual content of Xenophanes' authoritative knowledge is expressed in his hexameters, considering that in his elegies he simply states his authority and that he does not disclose any kind of knowledge other than that of his personal superiority.

The reason for Xenophanes' criticism of Homer and Hesiod is described mainly in the following fragments:

B11: πάντα θεοῖσ' ἀνέθηκαν Ὅμηρος θ' Ἡσίοδός τε,
ὅσσα παρ' ἀνθρώποισιν ὀνείδεα καὶ ψόγος ἐστίν,
κλέπτειν μοιχεύειν τε καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀπατεύειν.
B14: ἀλλ' οἱ βροτοὶ δοκέουσι γεννᾶσθαι θεούς,
τὴν σφετέρην δ' ἐσθῆτα ἔχειν φωνήν τε δέμας τε.

In these fragments Xenophanes simply expresses his rejection of the way in which the gods are represented in the epic. The basic point of his review is that he considers wrong the attribute of anthropomorphism, either in terms of physical constitution or in terms of morality, commonly attributed to gods. Xenophanes tells us elsewhere *why* the epic understanding of the nature of the divine is wrong.

B15: ἀλλ' εἰ χεῖρας ἔχον βόες ἵπποι τ' ἠὲ λέοντες
ἢ γράψαι χείρεσσι καὶ ἔργα τελεῖν ἅπερ ἄνδρες,
ἵπποι μὲν θ' ἵπποισι, βόες δέ τε βουσὶν ὁμοίας
καί κεν θεῖον ἰδέας ἔγραφον καὶ σώματ' ἐποίουν
τοιαῦθ' , οἷόν περ καὐτοὶ δέμας εἶχον ἕκαστοι.
B16: Αἰθίοπές τε θεοὺς σφετέρους σιμοὺς μέλανάς τε
Θρῆικές τε γλαυκοὺς καὶ πυρρούς φασι πέλεσθαι.

Xenophanes rests his case upon the very simple, but also logical, principle that men tend to perceive based on a "like-knows-like" assumption (B16), which nonetheless cannot in his view stand (B15). It is difficult to

[10] Cf. frs. B32 and B38. For attested elements of "rationality" in the poetry of Xenophanes, see discussion below.

overlook Xenophanes' reflective tone in these fragments. More specifically, the objection in fragment B15 derives from Xenophanes' observable experience, whereas fragment B15 is a *reductio ad absurdum* or a *modus tollens*.

If we view Xenophanes' attack on Homer and Hesiod in light of his reflective standpoint, it becomes apparent that for him it is not sufficient to simply express his strong disagreement with these prestigious authorities. He also takes interest in defending the reliability of his disagreement by showing to his audience *why* their traditional assumptions about the divine are false. Fragments B23-26, furthermore, clearly indicate that Xenophanes did not engage in a sterile criticism but that he also sought to replace the traditional anthropomorphism of the epos with his own personal view.

B23: εἷς θεὸς ἔν τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστος
οὔ τι δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοίιος οὐδὲ νόημα
B24: οὖλος ὁρᾶι, οὖλος δὲ νοεῖ, οὖλος δὲ τ' ἀκούει
B26: αἰεὶ δ' ἐν ταὐτῶι μίμνει κινεύμενος οὐδέν
οὐδὲ μετέρχεσθαί μιν ἐπιπρέπει ἄλλοτε ἄλλη

This set of fragments describes some of the basic and untraditional features of the divine according to Xenophanes. He believes that there is only one god (B23), who does not in any way resemble the human form (B23), the human way of sensing and of perceiving (B24), or human characteristics such as movement (B26). This understanding of the divine nature is based, moreover, upon the very simple realization that the divine by definition has a different nature from the human, and that as such it is not reasonable to believe that the two share common features. In his description of the divine Xenophanes evidently has in mind the way in which the epos represents the gods and, more specifically, the way in which the epos embodies an anthropomorphic interpretation of the divine. It therefore becomes apparent that Xenophanes' critique of the epic tradition brought about the suggestion of a new way of understanding the divine, which Xenophanes perceived in response to this well-established and authoritative tradition.

In addition, the content of his criticism implies that Xenophanes' intends not so much to point out to the fact that epic poetry altogether should be deprived of its social importance, but, more importantly, to criticise the epic mode of *understanding* as a valid source of acquiring knowledge about the gods. This aim is further underlined by that he refers to Homer and Hesiod by name, which suggests the importance of this point he wishes to make.[11] By referring to the most eminent representatives of this genre, furthermore, he wishes to hint at his personal competence as an individual authority worthy of public attention and acceptance. This is lucidly manifested in fragment B10, and more specifically in *μεμαθήκασι*, which reveals the competitive spirit with which he phrases his criticism of Homer and Hesiod.

The explicit mention of Homer and Hesiod shows not only that Xenophanes acknowledges these poets as authorities, but also that he differentiates his poetry, and especially his way of understanding the divine, from their work. This in turn suggests that he constructs his criticism of their theological views carefully and with some awareness about the specialty of his personal message. The purpose of his attack, moreover, is to reclaim for his poetry their position of authority in society.

It therefore seems that Xenophanes does not restrain himself in simply doubting the authoritativeness of the knowledge about the divine presented in the epos. He also affirms a new way of thinking about the divine and, eventually, of acquiring knowledge, which he contrasts to that which the epos made available and established. In his hexameters he proposes a more reasonable evaluation of one's personal beliefs about the gods. Xenophanes' more reflective attitude towards the nature of the divine is also manifested in fragments B32 and B38:

[11] Cf. Frs. B10 and B14.

B32: ἥν τ' Ἶριν καλέουσι, νέφος καὶ τοῦτο πέφυκε,
Πορφύρεον καὶ φοινίκεον καὶ χλωρὸν ἰδέσθαι
B38: εἰ μὴ χλωρὸν ἔφυσε θεὸς μέλι, πολλὸν ἔφασκον
γλύσσονα σῦκα πέλεσθαι.

The first fragment is a clear attempt to rationalise a religious view, while the second fragment is a remark upon the relativity and subjectivity of human knowledge in general. Although Xenophanes is not yet able to articulate this as a new method of approaching the question about the divine, he nonetheless appears conscious of the *need* for a new way of understanding. This new concern is also suggested by the epistemological concerns he phrases in fragments B18 and B34, which investigate the problem of *how* knowledge can be pursued.

It is worthy of note, however, that Xenophanes' scepticism towards the authority of Homer is not unprecedented. Already in Hesiod's invocation of the Muses we find an implicit criticism of Homer, and Stesichorus' palinode, which is a recantation of the story about Helen of Troy, was probably composed with the same intention. However, it seems that in these cases the author wishes to compete against the authority of Homer on grounds that he is able to present a better version of a traditional story, which Homer also recounted. Their objection to Homer's authority, moreover, does not aim in replacing Homeric ideology or morality, and it does not present a new way of understanding.

We have analysed above the special reflective nuances manifested in the way in which Xenophanes received Homeric tradition. This in turn suggests that he did not differentiate his poetry from that of Homer with exactly the same orientation and reflective mind as Hesiod and lyric poetry. Although the latter can be taken to phrase an objection towards Homer's authority, they do not explain to their audience the specific reason or reasons why his version is inferior to theirs, and they do not seek to displace his frame

of mind from society. And they, too, like Homer, take it for granted that they know better and that their truth is licensed by their status as poets.

In other words, the crucial difference between the two is that Xenophanes' scepticism towards Homer differs from that of Hesiod and of the Greek lyric in the respect that he does not criticise Homer's version of a story but the moral *implications* in general of his stories. In so doing, furthermore, he is also launching a direct attack on the very basis of epic authority and its validity of providing the audience with a morality worthy of wide acceptance. These cases therefore of Homeric criticism are differentiated from Xenophanes' not only in terms of the content of thought but also in terms of the authoritative intention they express.

At any event, the rational elements present in Xenophanes' fragments suggest that whilst he is at home with the epic tradition, as his choice of the hexameter and his phraseology imply, he nonetheless does not agree with the concerns and frame of mind which characterise this way of understanding the world and the gods. In so doing, his remarks also differ considerably from the reflective spirit towards the epic tradition which lyric poetry occasionally displays.

2. The particularity of his first elegy (fr. B1)

Several elements of the first surviving fragment of Xenophanes reveal strong associations with the elegiac genre. The metre, the language, the setting, the tone of voice, and even the topics discussed in this fragment, are typical in elegiac poetry.[12] The first lines of the poem in particular are dedicated to the description of an overtly symposiastic setting:

νῦν γὰρ δὴ ζάπεδον καθαρὸν καὶ χεῖρες ἁπάντων

[12] For a detailed examination of the elegiac overtones of this fragment, cf. Bowra (1938a), but also Marcovich (1978), Defradas (1962a), Campbell (1983), and Adkins (1985).

καὶ *κύλικες*. πλεκτοὺς δ' ἀμφιτιθεῖ *στεφάνους*,
ἄλλος δ' εὐῶδες μύρον ἐν φιάλῃ παρατείνει.
κρατὴρ δ' ἕστηκεν μεστὸς εὐφροσύνης,
ἄλλος δ' *οἶνος* ἕτοιμος, ὃς οὔποτέ φησι προδώσειν,
μείλιχος ἐν κεράμοισ' ἄνθεος ὀζόμενος.
ἐν δὲ μέσοισ' ἁγνὴν ὀδμὴν λιβανωτὸς ἵησι.
ψυχρὸν δ' ἔστιν ὕδωρ καὶ γλυκὺ καὶ καθαρόν.
πάρκειναι δ' ἄρτοι ξανθοὶ γεραρή τε τράπεζα
τυροῦ καὶ μέλιτος πίονος ἀχθομένη.
βωμὸς δ' ἄνθεσιν ἀν τὸ μέσον πάντῃ πεπύκασται,
μολπὴ δ' ἀμφὶς ἔχει δώματα καὶ *θαλίη*. (lines 1-12)

The first lines are full of sympotic catchwords such as *kylix*, garlands, *krater*, and, of course, wine.[13] In addition, the *νῦν* in the first line and the elegiac context of this fragment imply that Xenophanes is addressing a live audience and, more specifically, a small gathering at a symposium. This in turn suggests that Xenophanes delivered his poetry orally, and that for this reason he had to take into account, when composing, of the traditional expectations of his audience. It is also noteworthy that Xenophanes in these lines does not proceed to immediately state his authority to his audience, although he is, of course, credited with some recognition insofar as he is the one addressing the audience. But he does not proceed to openly phrase a claim to authority.

From line 13 onwards, however, Xenophanes' prominent position in the gathering is expressed somewhat more directly. Once the description of the setting is completed, that is, *χρή* introduces a new topic. In what follows Xenophanes articulates a moral duty:

χρὴ δὲ πρῶτον μὲν θεὸν ὑμνεῖν εὔφρονας ἄνδρας
εὐφήμοις μύθοις καὶ καθαροῖσι λόγοις.
σπείσαντας δὲ καὶ εὐξαμένους τὰ δίκαια δύνασθαι
πρήσσειν –ταῦτα γὰρ ὧν ἐστι προχειρότερον –

[13] Although, as Campbell points out in his analysis, Xenophanes apparently avoids using the standard Homeric epithets for wine (1983, p. 333). For wine as a favourite theme of Greek elegy, see also Campbell (1983, Ch. 2: pp. 28-53).

οὐχ ὕβρις πίνειν ὁπόσον κεν ἔχων ἀφίκοιο
οἴκαδ' ἄνευ προπόλου μὴ πάνυ γηραλέος. (lines 13-18)

The moral directives of these lines may be outlined as follows: praise and respect towards the gods, justly behaviour, and moderation in drinking. It also seems likely that the small length of these moral directives reinforced their memorability. At any event, it seems that Xenophanes assumes an authoritative standpoint for himself insofar as he appears self-confident enough to advise his audience. In other words, his willingness to provide his audience with a list of moral recommendations does seem to create an aura of authority. At the same time however, his remarks on appropriate behaviour at the symposium do not actually stray far from the general spirit of elegy's traditional moral aspirations.

In fact, there is nothing shockingly untraditional about the standpoint of authority which Xenophanes adopts in these lines. He simply presents himself to his audience as the leader of the symposium (*potarchon*), who is held responsible for advising the participants in the gathering and for regulating their behaviour. What is therefore remarkable about Xenophanes' tone in the first fragment is that he begins with his presentation by assuming a standpoint of authority for himself. In doing so, furthermore, he is obviously taking advantage of the freedom which the genre of elegy granted to individual poets in using a tone of authority in the live presentation of their poem.

This in turn accounts for why Xenophanes expected to be easily understood and agreed to by his audience and for that it is impossible to trace any sign of a reasonable argumentation in fragment B1. Xenophanes does not trouble himself with the development of an argument in order to state or clarify the reasons for his position of authority in the gathering. He also does not apparently feel the need to persuade his audience about the reliability or trustworthiness of the moral advice he gives them. Nowhere can we discern,

moreover, an explicit statement or declaration of personal authority, as in fragment B2 for example. Xenophanes' self-projection in these lines therefore shows that his representation as an individual with claims to a status of authority is cloaked with the vestment of tradition, since he appears to be the mouthpiece of traditional morality. His intentions and role in the gathering are thus rather clear and easy to decide, and they introduce no great originality in claiming a new position of authority in society.

However, there are two elements which may perhaps imply a movement towards a new orientation, and a shift in the manner of Xenophanes' self-presentation. The first is that Xenophanes addresses his poem to *εὔφρονες ἄνδρες*, and the second is found in the lines which follow the traditional declaration about sympotic behaviour. This change in Xenophanes' tone is partly reflected, for example, in the fact that in the second stanza all the statements, which bear an ethical value, are introduced with impersonal verbs or phrases denoting necessity.[14] In the first, and unquestionably traditionally elegiac, stanza on the other hand an accumulation of personal verbs is used in order to describe the occasion for the communication. In addition, the employment of impersonal verbs with moral overtones implies a claim laid to general validity, as in the case of gnomes, without openly affirming however Xenophanes' personal superiority for being able to perceive these moral recommendations in the first place.[15]

The sense of *εὔφρονες ἄνδρες* is however open to question. Of course, in such a context it is most likely to mean "cheerful" or "jolly".[16] Homer uses

[14] Cf. e.g. *χρή, ὕβρις* <*ἐστι*>, and *χρηστὸν ἔνεστι*.
[15] Cf. *ἀμφιτιθεῖ* (line 2), *παρατείνει* (line 3), *ἕστηκεν* (line 4), *προδώσειν* (line 5), *ἴησι* (line 7), *ἔστιν* (line 8), *πάρκεινται* (line 9), *πεπύκασται* (line 11) and *ἔχει* (line 12). The use of impersonal expressions in order to refer to commonsense values or truths of general validity is also found in the *Σκόλια*, where advice towards men is widely expressed in this way, resembling thus the style of proverbs (cf., e.g., *Carm. Conv.* 443, 444, 446 in Page's (1968) edition).
[16] Lesher thus translates "glad-hearted men" (1992, *ad loc.*).

the epithet once for wine and once in connection with feasting.[17] The epithet *εὔφρων* can be also used in order to denote the kindness of the gods towards their worshippers,[18] or a more general characteristic of being beneficial, favourable or simply "gracious".[19] This variety of meanings with which is *εὔφρων* is attested can be explained by the diversity in the sense that its compounds, namely *εὖ* and *φρήν*, have.

It can be generally said that the word is used in connection with a good intention, inclination, or mood. But when the word occurs in an obviously elegiac context, and whenever it relates to a festive occasion the most natural reading is, of course, "happy" or "gay".[20] However, the LSJ lexicon cites this line of Xenophanes as an example of the sense of *εὔφρων* as "someone with a sound mind". Some scholars have naturally objected to this reading on grounds that this sense of *εὔφρων* does not quite fit the evidently elegiac standards which Xenophanes adopts in this fragment, and which require the understanding of *εὔφρων* as "cheerful".[21]

The epithet *εὔφρων* can thus acquire the sense of either happy-minded, favourably-disposed, prosperous, but also (literally) good-thinking, i.e. prudent. This latter sense of *εὔφρων* is not in fact unknown in Xenophanes' time. Homer uses it in the formulaic phrase "*εὐφρονέων ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπεν*",[22] where the word appears to have evidently the sense of

[17] Cf. Γ 246: *οἶνον εὔφρονα*, and O 99: *εἴ πέρ τις…νῦν δαίνυται εὔφρων*.
[18] Cf. *Hom. Hymn.* In Ven. 103, Pind. *Ol*. 4.12.
[19] Cf. Pind. *Nem*. 7.67, Aesch. *Suppl*. 19, and *Ch*. 88.
[20] So also in Pind. *Nem.* 5.38: *εὔφρονες ἴλαι…θεὸν δέκονται.* Cf., also Semon. fr. 7.99 W: *εὔφρων ἡμέρην διέρχεται ἅπασαν*, and Alcman's version of what qualifies for a "happy" day in 1.1.37: *ὄλβιος ὅστις εὔφρων ἁμέραν διαπλέκει ἄκλαυτος*; but also Theogn. fr. 1.765W: *εὔφρονα θυμὸν ἔχοντας…εὐφροσύνως διάγειν τερπομένους*. The only example from elegy in which these two senses of *εὔφρων* to coincide is in Theogn. fr. 2. 1327 ff.: *δὸς δ' εὔφρονι θυμῶι…τελέσαντ' ἔργματα σωφροσύνης*.
[21] So according to Adkins (1985, p. 181) and Campbell (1983, p. 334).
[22] Cf., e.g., H 326, H 367, I 95, O 285, and Σ 253. Cf. also, *Hymn. Hom.* In Ven. 14.

"prudent", like its later equivalent *ἔμφρων*. However it is in Aeschylus that this sense of *εὔφρων* occurs.[23]

It then seems that in the context of elegiac poetry, or in wherever the setting recalls immediately that of the elegiac atmosphere, *εὔφρων* generally has the sense "cheerful". It does seem however that the alternative sense however as "prudent" was made already available in Xenophanes' age, as examples from Homer and Aeschylus show, whenever the context calls for the sense of "prudence" and not of "festivity". Defradas thus maintained that there is an intentional interplay between these two senses of *εὔφρων*.[24] This reading is also encouraged by the pairing of *εὔφρονες* with the *ability* of *τὰ δίκαια πρήσσειν*, to which we should at least grant some relevance to intellectual ability. In order to be *δίκαιος*, that is say, one has to have the intelligence to distinguish between what is morally right from what is wrong, and vice versa.

Xenophanes' employment of a standard elegiac epithet in an elegy but perhaps with its non-elegiac standard meaning, suggests his desire to distance himself from this kind of poetry and, consequently, of the kind of posture of authority normally associated with this kind of poetry. This is also suggested in that *εὔφρων* is meant to intentionally mirror *εὐφροσύνη* of line 4, hinting thereby at the contrast between these two types of authority. The epithet *εὔφρονες* however is not the only example, which might perhaps indicate Xenophanes' intention to distance his poetry from the standards of elegy.

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[23] Cf. Aesch. *Suppl*. 640: *ψῆφον εὔφρον' ἔθεντο* ("cast a vote in our favour); *Ag*. 351: *γύναι, κατ' ἄνδρα σώφρον' εὐφρόνως λέγεις* ("lady you speak as wisely as a prudent man"); but also, *Choeph*. 88, and *Eum*. 992.

[24] Cf. Defradas (1962a, p. 357). According to his view, *εὐφροσύνη* is synonymous to *φιλοφροσύνη*, namely friendliness or kindliness. By *εὔφρονες ἄνδρες* he understands "les joyeux convives". Defradas claims that the phrase *εὐφήμοις μύθοις καὶ καθαροῖσι λόγοις* suggests an intellectual quality, from which he concludes upon the existence of a "thiase philosophique". This view seems far-fetched, although the general spirit of his analysis is safe.

In the last four lines of fragment B1 Xenophanes launches a criticism against the stories about the battle with the Titans, by which he seems to be hinting at Hesiod.[25] Although this kind of criticism is not wholly new, it connects Xenophanes' elegies with his non-elegiac poetry. It constitutes an example of his critical spirit, or of his "destructive criticism" as some scholars have understood it,[26] with which Xenophanes tends to face traditional ways of thinking and of understanding.

> οὔτι μάχας διέπων Τιτήνων οὐδὲ Γιγάντων
> οὐδέ <τε> Κενταύρων, πλάσματα τῶν προτέρων,
> ἢ στάσιας σφεδανάς, τοῖσ' οὐδὲν χρηστὸν ἔνεστι.
> θεῶν <δὲ> προμηθείην αἰὲν ἔχειν ἀγαθόν.

We have observed in the introduction that criticism was common amongst poets in order to establish personal superiority against other skilful individuals.[27] In fact, Anacreon expresses in one of his poems a criticism which bears striking similarities with what Xenophanes says in these last lines of his first fragment.[28]

> οὐ φιλέω, ὅς κρητῆρι παρὰ πλέωι οἰνοποτάζων
> νείκεα καὶ πόλεμον δακρυόεντα λέγει,
> ἀλλ' ὅστις Μουσέων τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ δῶρ' Ἀφροδίτης
> συμμίσγων ἐρατῆς μνήσκεται εὐφροσύνης.

The significant difference, however, from Xenophanes' criticism on Titanomachy is that Anacreon dismisses warlike themes from his poetry, because he thinks that such songs do not exactly fit the sympotic occasion and

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[25] For an examination of the way in which Xenophanes' criticism of the story about the fight of the Titans was received by his audience, see Sanford (1941, esp. pp. 53-55). The Titanomachy is described by Hesiod in *Th.* 629 ff.

[26] So according to Guthrie (1965, p. 370). Guthrie also draws attention in his examination to the relation of Xenophanes' destructive criticism with his "constructive theology" (pp. 373-80). Freeman also points out to this, when she remarks that Xenophanes' "ideas on the nature of the deity resulted from his attack on the anthropomorphism of the gods" (1953, p. 95).

[27] As KRS observe "destructive criticism of gods was active for the poets in Xenophanes' age" (1983, p. 180).

[28] Cf. Anacr. fr. eleg. 2.

especially the cheerful atmosphere of the drinking party. This is implied by the way in which Anacreon contrasts *νείκεα* and *πόλεμος* to *εὐφροσύνη*. Xenophanes justifies his view, however, by introducing a new element of what can qualify for *χρηστόν*. With this phrase, furthermore, Xenophanes picks up the theme of moral appropriateness and of moral obligation, which he presents to his audience in the previous lines.

It therefore becomes apparent that Xenophanes implies something more than just the frivolous atmosphere of the symposium, which Anacreon has in mind when he expresses his criticism of this poetic theme. In addition, in the last line of B1 Xenophanes makes one further point. He claims that it is "good to always pay *careful* respect to the gods". Unfortunately the fragment breaks off at this point, and we are unable to know in which particular way Xenophanes thought that one can show his respect towards the gods. Yet his use of *προμηθείην* suggests that he grants this respect that one should display towards the divine with a somewhat reflective quality, which he perhaps develops in his hexameters. If this is true, then it appears that the elegy of B1 is not so much cut-off from the rest of Xenophanes' thinking.

The first fragment of Xenophanes is important because it reveals Xenophanes' uneasiness with the elegiac standards, from which however he does not openly differentiate himself. At the same time, however, it is possible to trace some elements in this fragment which very subtly indicate a different tone of poetic authority. In the second part of fragment B1, that is, new ideas are introduced, while the epithet *εὔφρων* is credited with an alternative sense.

It should be pointed out that fragment B1 does not provide us with sufficient evidence about Xenophanes' clear and distinct differentiation from the tradition of elegy. He also does not introduce in fragment B1 a wholly new kind of discussion in the symposium. All the same, it does seem however that he is already not feeling at home with the tradition of elegy, although he is not yet able to consciously phrase this nonetheless as a new concern or to

provide for his poetry a new kind of orientation. The latter is more clearly, yet also not openly stated, in his second surviving fragment.

3. Xenophanes' expertise: his *σοφίη* (fr. B2)

In fragment B2, however, Xenophanes appears confident enough not only to openly affirm his superior status of authority (*ἄξιος ὥσπερ ἐγώ*), but to also construct an explicit defence of his expertise (*σοφίη*).[29] One should reasonably expect to find in these lines some information about the way in which Xenophanes perceived the speciality of his task.[30] Arthur Adkins aptly observed that the contrast between *σοφίης* and *ῥώμης* implies something more than just the contrast of two mainstream virtues. He argues that while the first is a dactylic, the second is a spondaic, and that this disparity of metre would have produced an effect which would surely attract the attention of Xenophanes' audience, and underline the importance of the claim he makes.[31] The answer is definitely hinted at in *σοφίη*, but it is not exactly clear in what particular sense Xenophanes refers to his personal expertise or wisdom.

The noun *σοφίη* appears in early Greek literature not so much with the sense of "wisdom" but with the sense of possessing some specialised knowledge about *how* to do things, and it is in this spirit perhaps that Aristotle later understands *σοφία* as *ἀρετὴ τέχνης*.[32] It could be thus applied

[29] Athenaus thus understood Xenophanes to be lay a claim to a status of superior wisdom (cf. *Deipn*. 10.6,25). In a similar fashion, Bowra comments that "all Xenophanes wants is honour" (1938b, p. 262). For a detailed analysis of this fragment, see Bowra's outdated but useful article (1938b), and Adkins (1985). It is also worthy of note that the general spirit with which Xenophanes speaks in B2 is not unparalleled in Greek literature. Cf. e.g. Tyrtaeus (fr. 9W).

[30] For the importance of the claims which Xenophanes makes in B2 in connection with the higher status he claims for himself in society, see also Lesher (1991, p. 237).

[31] Cf. Adkins (1985, p. 193). The conspicuous contrast of *σοφίη* to *ῥώμη* is also noted by Campbell (1983, p. 265), who identifies Xenophanes' *σοφίη* however with his poetic skill.

[32] Cf. *Eth. Nic*. 6.7.

either to the craft of a builder, a wood-cutter, or the like thus denoting the possession of a practical skill. It could be also used, however, for a poet in order to describe his, more intellectual, skill of having a good command of language in the communication of his message or in order to acknowledge the superior status of the knowledge he discloses to his audience.[33]

It is in light of this evidence that some scholars have translated Xenophanes' *σοφίη* as "art", "craft", or as "poetic skill".[34] K. Reinhardt, furthermore, interpreted the *σοφίη* of B2 in connection with the phrases *εὐφήμοις μύθοις* and *καθαροῖσι λόγοις* of B1, from which relation he concluded upon that *σοφίη* refers to the poetic dexterity of Xenophanes.[35] It should be pointed out however, that these two phrases of fragment B1 are explicitly attributed to *εὔφρονες ἄνδρες* and not to Xenophanes himself as in the case of his *σοφίη*.

It seems unwise to assume however that Xenophanes intends to imply his poetic skill, when he makes a mention to his personal *σοφίη*. To begin with, it cannot be safely argued that Xenophanes is an example of a skilful poet. This was clear for Cicero but also for some modern scholars.[36] His verses are occasionally weak and less polished than one would normally expect from an individual conscious of his poetic charisma and his status in society as a poet. It is in this vein that Marcovich observed that wisdom prevails in

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[33] This is perhaps suggested by the formulae *κατὰ κόσμον* or *μοῖραν*, which are used in order to describe the skill of singing in Homeric poetry (cf. e.g. θ 489). For other uses of *σοφία* in connection with the superior status of the poet, see Hes. Fr. 306; but also Ibycus, for whom the Muses are *σεσοφισμέναι* (1a23.11), and Solon who declares that he knows *ἱμερτῆς σοφίης μέτρον* (fr. 13.52W).

[34] Cf. Burnet (1930, p. 117), Freeman (1953, p. 21), and Campbell (1983, p. 338) respectively. Bowra on the other hand resorts to the more general reading of *σοφίη* as "proficiency in any *τέχνη*" (1938b, p. 260).

[35] Cf. Reinhardt (1916, p. 132). For a similar view, see also Adkins, *loc. cit*.

[36] Cf. Cic. *Acad*. II.74 and, e.g., Adkins (1985, p. 174). Adkins argues that Xenophanes is one of the technically least well-equipped poets, although he does, of course, have an imagination with some poetic qualities.

Xenophanes over poetic skill.[37] In the case that Xenophanes had understood his *σοφίη* in relation with the status of the poet, then it certainly strikes one as odd that he failed to devise more competitive verses, which would also help him establish himself as a competent individual poet. At the same time, his shortcoming implies the difficulty which he had to face when using a medium of expression which was not designed to serve the kind of message he wanted to put across.

When one views the poetry of Xenophanes as a whole, it becomes apparent that his "wisdom" lies not so much in devising elegant lyrics, which in any case requires a certain technical skill, but in his *extensive* criticism of traditional beliefs and acclaimed poets such as Homer and Hesiod.[38] The latter is the most prominent and recurrent feature of his poetry, due to which Xenophanes acquired his reputation in antiquity. In other words, the very content of his thought is the element which distinguishes his otherwise poetic speech from other traditional modes of poetic presentation.

It has been already noted in the introduction that in the epic poetry of Homer the poet perceives his craft in connection with his ability to narrate and make known the great deeds of the past. In the live performance of the epic poet the personal quality of his *τέχνη* was manifested in his ability to exploit traditional material adequately, either formulae, motifs, or stories, when composing his poem. The expected outcome of his performance, furthermore, was the instruction but also the entertainment of the audience. The educational value of the material presented was thus a standard option for poets as well as for the contexts of poetic communication such as, most evidently, that of the Greek symposium.[39]

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[37] For his examination of *σοφίη*, see Marcovich (1978, p. 22 ff.).

[38] See also the analysis in the previous section.

[39] For the general educational tendency of the symposium, see e.g. Jaeger (1946-7, p. 172), but also Murray (1990). For the tendency of Greek lyric to instruct, see, for

In the surviving poetry of Xenophanes, however, it is impossible to find any trace of his intention to please his audience, although, it is only plain to see, his speech retains the educational value of poetry. The phrase *ἐμὴν φροντίδ'* of fragment B8, moreover, may perhaps imply, as some scholars have suggested, his desire to teach through his poetry.[40] Throughout his fragments Xenophanes appears to be particularly concerned with correcting the set of personal convictions and customary beliefs of his audience, which, according to his view, they acquired from other acknowledged poets. In order to achieve this aim, as G. Wöhrle remarks, he employs the language of the epos so as to construct his personal identity as a teacher in relation with an existing tradition of instruction.[41] It seems then that Xenophanes' choice of verse was not a default option, as it certainly is for poets, but just a necessary feature which was dictated by the live presentation of his poetry.

It then becomes apparent that Xenophanes competed against the great authorities of Homer and Hesiod not because he truly considered himself a poet but because he wanted to replace their frame of mind and the moral implications of their stories with his personal view about the divine. In the introduction, furthermore, it has been already pointed out that the poets usually competed against one another in terms of the way in which a traditional story could be told differently. Seen in this light, it would perhaps be unwise to understand, together with Adkins, Xenophanes' coining of new words, such as *δόκος* in fragment B34, as evidence for his poetic art.[42] It

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instance, the well-known declaration of Solon: *ταῦτα διδάξαι θυμὸς Ἀθηναίους με κελεύει* (fr. 4.30W).

[40] So according to Nietzsche (2006, p. 79). Xenophanes is understood as a teacher with a message to convey also by Guthrie, for whom the poetic form of his presentation is not bar to his "philosophy" (1965, p. 361).

[41] Cf. Wöhrle (1993a, p. 17). For a more detailed examination of this issue, see analysis in the previous section.

[42] Cf. Adkins (1985, p. 194). The verb *προκρίνειν* of fragment B2 is another example which Adkins adduces in his analysis. For an examination of Xenophanes' language

cannot be safely argued on such grounds that Xenophanes conspicuously displays in his work a poetic skill, mainly because this feature does not appear to generally characterise his style.

In fragment B2 Xenophanes does not appear to adopt the same standpoint of self-presentation as in fragment B2. The significance of fragment B2, that is to say, lies in that Xenophanes does not simply declare his personal superiority over the athletes; he also provides his audience with a justification of his view.[43] The reason why he appears to be laying a claim to a status of authority can be outlined as follows:

A (basic statement): οὐκ ἐὼν *ἄξιος* ὥσπερ ἐγώ
A¹: *ῥώμης* γὰρ ἡμετέρη *σοφίη*
A²: τοὔνεκεν (sc. ῥώμης) ἂν δὴ μᾶλλον ἐν *εὐνομίηι* πόλις εἴη
A²¡: σμικρὸν δ' ἄν τι *πόλει* χάρμα γένοιτ' ἐπὶ τῶι
A²¡¡: οὐ γὰρ πιαίνει ταῦτα μοιχοὺς *πόλεως*

The basic statement of these lines is an open declaration of personal superiority, which seems to be connected with Xenophanes' mention of *σοφίη* and *εὐνομίη* in the following lines.[44] J. Lesher draws attention to the fact that Xenophanes employs in these lines words which denote cause,[45] while H. Fränkel is eager to accept an argumentative quality in these words.[46] It is only fair to admit, however, that it is not exactly beyond doubt that these lines can be with much ease considered an argument, let alone a philosophical

in connection with epic diction in specific, see also Classen (1989). For the importance and significance of *δόκος* in Xenophanes' thought, see analysis below.

[43] Bowra observes that Xenophanes is here making an appeal to deep-seated convictions of his audience (1938b, p. 273). According to his interpretation, Xenophanes attacks in B2 the athletes because their prowess is bound to encourage *ὕβρις*.

[44] Bowra draws attention to the fact that in 5th century Greece the notion of *εὐνομίη* and of *δίκη* were among the catchwords of the aristocracy (1938b, p. 271).

[45] Such as *γὰρ* and *τοὔνεκεν*, cf. Lesher (1992, *ad loc.*).

[46] Cf. Fränkel (1975).

argument.[47] Yet at the same time it is only plain to see that Xenophanes is here interested in persuading his audience about the reliability of the view he is putting across, although he does not, of course, resort to an argumentative syllogism.

At any event, it is not exactly clear why Xenophanes expected his poetry to be of such a great importance to the community or which particular aspect or function of his poetry he believed to contribute in the common good. It is impossible to determine, that is to say, the particularities of the relationship between civil *εὐνομίη* and Xenophanes' *σοφίη* upon which he apparently bases his case. The obvious similarity of the claim which Xenophanes is making here with Solon suggests that Xenophanes is perhaps exploiting for his self-presentation the not unfamiliar understanding of the wise man as someone who is active in the politics of his city.[48]

If we choose to interpret *εὐνομίη* with its literal sense, then it is only natural to accept together with Fränkel that *σοφίη* is "the ability to improve laws and to increase the prosperity of the community".[49] In a similar vein, Adkins considers *εὐνομίη* as the basic condition for the good government of the *polis*, while Jean Defradas refers to *εὐνομίη* in order to argue that Xenophanes is setting the standards in fragment B1 for the "bons citoyens".[50] A considerable portion of the surviving poetry of Solon however is a direct

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[47] Curd has offered an extensive analysis of the lack of argumentation in Xenophanes (1998). According to her interpretation, Xenophanes is generally characterised by a tendency to dogmatically assert rather than to argue for his views.

[48] For an analysis of the apparent similarities between Solon and Xenophanes, see Lumpe's short note (1955, p. 378). He points out that Xenophanes employs the same vocabulary in B2 as Solon in fr. 3. Freeman and Vamvakas, moreover, have observed that both individuals share the same moral concept of personal moderation (cf. 1953, p. 99 and 2006, p. 138, respectively). Xenophanes' *σοφίη* is interpreted as some sort of practical knowledge by Reinhardt (1916, p. 140), Marcovich (1978, p. 22), and Gigon (1945, p. 189).

[49] Cf. Bowra (1938b), p. 271.

[50] Cf. Fränkel, *ibid*.

[50] Cf. Adkins (1985, p. 187), and Defradas (1962a, p. 360).

testimony of his active involvement in the political life of Athens.[51] Had Xenophanes considered *εὐνομίη* as central to his expertise then one would normally expect him to display a similar awareness in his poems. Quite on the contrary, the fragments of Xenophanes frequently reveal his interest in religion, religiousness and morality, and in the constitution of the cosmos.[52] It is this kind of questions he is concerned with, and the special quality of his *σοφίη* lies in the answers he provides to these questions.

The notion thus of "utilité publique", as Defradas put it, acquires in the poetry of Xenophanes a new interpretation. It is the moral constitution and the new understanding of the divine which he proposes the elements that define the specialty of the message he delivers. It is these aspects of his poetry, furthermore, that he possibly considered as worthy of public attention, and which he believed to contribute to the common good.

It is in this spirit that W. Jaeger's very early study on the poetry of Xenophanes interprets his *σοφίη* as the "metaphysical foundation of city-state morality" and concludes that what Xenophanes means with *σοφίη* is the "spiritual education" which he offered to the members of his audience.[53] This suggestion is attractive, especially when considering Xenophanes' interest in

[51] Solon's interest in politics is manifested, for example, in fr. 4.32W, in which he describes the political situation in his city. Solon also refers explicitly to his public reforms in frs. 5W and 36W. See also his telling remarks on politics in fr. 6 (on how to treat the *δῆμος*), and in fr. 11 (on advising his fellow-citizens against Peisistratus' tyranny).

[52] Xenophanes' poetry is viewed as an attempt to moralise his fellow citizens by Defradas (1926a, p. 359) and, more recently, by Vamvakas (2006, p. 140).

[53] Cf. Jaeger (1946-7, pp. 171-4). His view, however, that Xenophanes sought with his philosophical ideal to "eject the old aristocratic culture from its place and power" seems farfetched. It is highly unlikely that Xenophanes' "intellectual culture" implied any form of social revolt. Although the general spirit of Jaeger's interpretation is safe, it should be nonetheless treated with caution, because it occasionally credits Xenophanes with more consciously political concerns than his surviving poetry attests to. For an extensive criticism of his interpretation, see Bowra (1938b, p. 258).

depriving Homer and Hesiod from the status of the teacher, which he desired to claim for himself.

In a similar vein, Bowra interpreted Xenophanes' *σοφίη* in connection with his philosophical and didactic poetry, while A. Pasquinelli, who translates "la nostra sapienza", understands *σοφίη* as "un' attività puramente speculativa".[54] It has been already noted, furthermore, that in fragment B2 Xenophanes deliberately contrasts his personal *σοφίη* to the physical strength (*ῥώμης*) of the athletes. This contrast encourages the understanding of *σοφίη* as a virtue which has some intellectual quality. Taken alone, however, this hardly adds anything substantial to our understanding of the peculiar nature of Xenophanes' expertise, and it is in the interest of this analysis to describe the particularities Xenophanes' self-presentation to his audience. It is important for this reason to pursue an investigation of the way in which Xenophanes' "intellectuality" manifests itself in the surviving fragments and, more specifically, in fragments B18 and B34.

4. Establishing Xenophanes' expertise: frs. B18 and B34

i) *ζήτησις* and *εὕρεσις* of fr. B18

In fragment B18 Xenophanes expresses an epistemological remark, which provides us with important information about the way in which he understood his personal expertise. The fragment runs as follows:

> οὔ τοι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς πάντα θεοῖ θνητοῖσ' ὑπέδειξαν,
> ἀλλὰ χρόνωι ζητοῦντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον.

In German scholarship these lines are commonly taken to refer to the progress of human civilization, while ancient tradition credits Xenophanes

[54] Cf. Bowra (1938b, p. 260) and Pasquinelli (1976, p. 357). According to Pasquinelli's examination, Xenophanes was a "filosofo rhapsodo". This question was discussed in the previous section.

with an awareness about the cultural developments of his times.[55] It is difficult to lend our support to this reading of B18, especially when taking into consideration that there is no serious suggestion of this assumption in the surviving lines of this fragment, as Lesher has recently pointed out.[56] In the same spirit, J.P. Dumont reads in fragment B18 Xenophanes' faith in "un progrès de la connaissance".[57] Nor can it be safely argued that *πάντα* stands for "Kultur" in this fragment, as Fränkel argues, mainly because this noun is far too general to encourage its identification with anything in particular.[58] English scholarship on the other hand has proposed a more natural reading of B18, which seems to be closer to what Xenophanes is most likely to be saying in this fragment. English scholars, that is to say, understand Xenophanes to be expressing here the notion of personal inquiry, which may be contrasted to the kind of knowledge which some charismatic individuals were believed to acquire through divine dispensation.[59]

What has not received the attention it perhaps deserves, however, is that with the phrase *πάντα θεοί θνητοῖσ' ὑπέδειξαν* Xenophanes might have implied a challenge to the prestige of the epic poet. It is nearly impossible to miss the obvious echo in this line of the traditional role with which the Muses are credited in the epos. According to the claims which the epic poet makes

[55] So according to Nestle (1966, p. 2), Steinmetz (1966, p. 60), and Fränkel (1951, p. 380). Hermann on the other hand slightly differentiates his view from theirs in the respect that he opts for scientific instead of cultural progress (2004, p. 137).
[56] Cf. Lesher (1991, p. 246).
[57] Cf. Dumont (1988, *ad* B18).
[58] Cf. Fränkel (1925, p. 183, fn. 4). According to his interpretation Xenophanes is here expressing his disagreement with the traditional belief of "Kultur als Gottesgabe". There is some truth in this, but nonetheless it is impossible to argue that Xenophanes implies in this fragment the progress of human civilization.
[59] So according to KRS (1983, p. 179), Popper (1998, p. 48), Lesher (1991, p. 233), and Guthrie (1965, p. 376). Although Guthrie maintains that Xenophanes is referring to the progress of arts and sciences (p. 399). In a similar fashion Heitsch claims that knowledge is for a Xenophanes a personal ability and a matter of personal responsibility (1966, p. 221).

in significant and crucial parts of his presentation, the Muses are prone to reveal superior and out of ordinary reach information to particularly charismatic individuals. These individuals on the other hand lay a claim to a superior status on grounds that the knowledge which he discloses to his audience is the product of an insight which a divinity bestowed upon him.

The importance of this divine communion, moreover, is further illustrated to the audience in epic poetry through the belief that the Muses are, due to their divine status, omniscient, and for this reason they are in a position to reveal all sorts of information which is otherwise unknown, indeed unattainable.[60] This standard belief which the great poets of the epos exploited for their self-representation is hinted at in fragment B18 with the contrast between *θεοὶ* and *θνητοί*. It does seem, however, that the statement which Xenophanes makes here adds on to the traditional concept about the natural disparity between human and divine knowledge.[61]

The core of Xenophanes' criticism is found in *ὑπέδειξαν*. It seems that the compound verb *ὑποδείκνυμι* does not belong to the usual stock of poetic phraseology; it actually appears fairly more frequently in 5th century prose. It is used in the Hippocratic treatise in order to denote the discovery of a certain symptom.[62] The simple form of the verb, namely *δείκνυμι*, which generally has a similar meaning, appears regularly in the poetry of Homer.[63]

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[60] See, for example, in the catalogue of the ships (B485 ff.), in which the nature of the interaction between the poet and his divine patron is better described.
relationship of the poet with his divine

[61] See, e.g. Alcmaeon, B1 and Varo (*apud* Augustinus), *CD* VII. 17: *hominis enim haec opinari, dei scire*.

[62] Hippocr. *Progn.* 912; *Coa Praesagia,* 483.7; and *de decente habitu,* 16.5. For other examples from prose, see Thuc. *Hist.* 1. 77.6; Isocr. *Philip.* 27.6; *Panath.* 166.7; and *Nic.* 57.3. Xenophon uses the verb in order to claim that the good *ἔργα* we see around us are a sign of the existence of gods (Cf. *Mem*. 4.3.13.5). See also *Anab*. 5.7.12.3.

[63] It is used, for example, of a thunder sent by Zeus, through which his presence to men is revealed (N 244), and also of Achilles' placing of his trophies on public display, something which will make his excellence known to the rest of the Greeks (Ψ 701). Cf. also Hes. *Op*. 451 and I 196, δ 59.

Xenophanes' use of the compound form of the verb adds an element of secrecy in the way in which the communication of divine knowledge takes place. This immediately brings to mind the intimacy with which the Muse was believed to pass her divine knowledge on to the epic poets. At any event, the uncommonness of this verb might perhaps suggest that Xenophanes is here trying to voice a new and unfamiliar idea and that he is careful about the way he phrases his message. The use of an unfamiliar verb, furthermore, would strike the ear in performance thus capturing the attention of the audience and underlying the importance of the view that Xenophanes wants to put across.

In addition, it seems that Xenophanes employed contrasting phrases whenever he desired to point towards a new orientation. This has become apparent from fragment B2, in which Xenophanes openly contrasts his personal expertise to that of the athletes, but also from fragment B1, in which it is possible to trace his subtle intention to contrast his poetry to tradition. In a similar fashion, the phrasing of fragment B18 is based upon the accumulation of several contrasts.

To begin with, the contrast between *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* and *χρόνωι*, suggests that for Xenophanes men do not enter automatically the state of knowing, as in the case of poetic inspiration. It seems that Xenophanes regarded the acquisition of knowledge as a rather slow and painstaking process. In addition, the fact that this contrast is expressed with the conjunctions *οὐ* and *ἀλλά* suggests not only that Xenophanes denies divine knowledge but also that he is at pains to substitute it with *personal* inquiry (*ζητοῦντες*). This in turn implies that it is of cardinal importance for Xenophanes to lay a claim to the personal responsibility, and hence superiority, which one acquires, when he seeks knowledge based on his own powers. This statement was an open challenge of the reliability and prestige of the knowledge which was presented by epic poetry or by the oracles and the diviners.

In addition, the verb *ζητῶ*, with which Xenophanes describes the process of searching for knowledge, also occurs in Parmenides' definition of the two possible way of inquiry, which he calls *ὁδοὶ διζήσιος*.[64] It is also worthy of note that in both Xenophanes and Parmenides *ζητῶ* appears in a strongly epistemological context, which indicates the significance of this term. If we view these two cases in light of one another, it then seems reasonable to assume that Xenophanes is perhaps trying to phrase in fragment B18 the need for a new method of knowing in general or for a new method of investigation in specific. It is impossible to agree with E. Heitsch, however, in understanding *ζητοῦντες* as "systematische Vermehrung von Erfahrung".[65] We are not in the position to tell the particular characteristics of this new method, which Xenophanes had in mind and the fragment is certainly too short to provide a substantial proof of a belief in any systematic method. All the same, it would be unwise to disregard the obvious association of *ζήτησις* with a reflective, yet unspecified, quality. It then becomes apparent that for Xenophanes the basis for authority should not be sought in the gods, as in the case of epic poetry, but rather in personal *ζήτησις*, which in turn implies that with Xenophanes knowledge is made for the first time a matter of an entirely personal concern.[66]

In addition, the phrase *ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον* refers to the result of this personal investigation. It thus describes the way in which knowledge can be acquired according to Xenophanes. The verb *ἐφευρίσκω* is not normally used in such a context in poetry, and it thus seems that Xenophanes

[64] Cf. Parm. B2. For other uses of *ζητῶ* in poetry, cf. Sol. Fr. 27.10W, Theogn. 1.683, and Aesch. *Pr*. 262.

[65] Cf. Heitsch (1966, p. 196).

[66] McKirahan thus maintained that Xenophanes "rejects divine revelation as a source for knowledge" and that his knowledge is a "product of rational inquiry" (1994, p. 67). Lesher thus took *ὑποδείκνυμι* to refer to "the matter of divine communication to mortals" (1991, p. 237). In a similar vein, Pasquinelli observed that Xenophanes appends knowledge to everyday experience and not to the gods (1976, p. 358).

deliberately uses it in this fragment in order to underline his point. Its sense, however, is not unclear: it means "to discover".[67] According to Lesher, furthermore, this phrase is a declaration of authoritative superiority.[68] The immediate implication of Lesher's suggestion is that Xenophanes affirms in fragment B18 the existence of different grades of knowledge, although he does not explicitly refer to himself.[69]

M. Untersteiner argued that for Xenophanes the process of acquiring knowledge is gradual, and that only he who has managed to "discover what is better" deserves to be called a *σοφός*. Untersteiner claims in his analysis that the intermediate state is that of *δοξάζειν* (i.e. true opinion), whereas the last stage is the knowledge of the *σαφές*.[70] It therefore becomes apparent that Xenophanes did not have a sceptical or relativistic approach to knowledge, as some scholars have maintained,[71] since in fragment B18 he openly acknowledges the possibility of acquiring a more reliable truth.

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[67] From which sense the verb later acquired the negative sense of "to devise". Cf., e.g. Eur. *Andr*. 451-2: *οὐ λέγοντες ἀλλὰ μὲν γλώσσηι φρονοῦντες δ'ἄλλ' ἐφευρίσκεσθ' ἀεί*, and Soph. *OC* 938: *δρῶν δ'ἐφευρίσκηι κακά*. It could be also used more loosely in order to denote the sense "to find". Cf. Xenoph. *Vect.* 4.40.6 and Pl. *Pol*. 307c.

[68] Cf. Lesher (1991, p. 246). According to his interpretation, men do not simply discover what is better but is *authoritatively* better.

[69] As Reinhardt observed Xenophanes does not refer in B18 to his personal findings but he phrases a general remark about human knowledge (1916, p. 141). All the same, it is plain to see that, as KRS argue, Xenophanes held himself to be in a special state of insight (1983, p. 179).

[70] Cf. Untersteiner (1956, p. CCXXXV). That *ἄμεινον* is equal to *σοφόν* is partly suggested by the fact that for Xenophanes the process of discovering "what is better" is conditioned by intelligent inquiry. For the authoritative implications of the *σαφὲς-δόκος* contrast, see analysis below.

[71] Pasquinelli thus concluded that "la conoscenza delle cose non è assoluta, una solo relativa"(1976, p. 358). The interpretations which support a sceptical reading of Xenophanes make no mention of fragment B18 and they are focused rather on Xenophanes' *δόκος* in B34. But Xenophanes clearly affirms the possibility of knowing in B18.

The distinction between human and divine knowledge was a traditional belief in Greek culture, which goes back to Homer.[72] The originality of Xenophanes lies, however, in that with fragment B18 he revises the implications of this notion and re-views in an epistemological, and potentially philosophical, context. He makes, that is, the natural disparity between human (i.e. ordinary) and divine (i.e. extraordinary, and not immediately available) knowledge the foundation, upon which a new kind of expertise can be pursued.[73] Xenophanes was not interested in providing an answer to the question of *who* knows betters, namely gods or men, but in providing an answer to the question of *how* is it possible for men to acquire knowledge based on their own powers.

Fragment B18 then views the question of knowledge from the standpoint of the *θνητοί*. Xenophanes separates mortal knowledge from its previously divine sources, since according to him men stand alone in their attempt to discover what is "better". With this statement, furthermore, he implies a contrast with the popular belief that the gods are prone to communicate their knowledge, as claimed by the epic poets and the diviners. In this way he effectively emphasised his *personal* expertise against other traditional types of experts.

The expertise of a charismatic individual is thus no longer identified with the ability to contact or be contacted by divine patrons. Xenophanes clearly states in fragment B18 that expert knowledge originates from personal

[72] It was a "Gemeinplatz" as Mansfeld points out (1983, p. 212).

[73] Deichgräber claimed that for Xenophanes human understanding is a divine property which consists in the combination of certainty (*σαφές*) with uncertainty (*δόκος*). However, this interpretation disregards the point which Xenophanes makes in B18, in which he attempts to discard the communication with the divine as a reliable source of knowing and to disassociate divine intervention from human knowledge. It is unwise, furthermore, to charge *σαφές* with a divine overtone, as Deichgräber maintains, because in fragment B34 Xenophanes explicitly attributes it to men and not to gods (1938, p. 21).

effort and that it is therefore the product of personal aptitude. The particular way in which Xenophanes understood personal expertise is hinted at with *ἐφευρίσκουσιν*, which the context of fragment B18 encourages us to understand as thoughtful inquiry. Xenophanes also registers for the first time *ζήτησις* as the concern of individuals who want to lay a claim to a status of authority. It then becomes apparent that although Xenophanes does not propose a specific method of investigation, he nonetheless attempts to initiate the personal quest for the discovery of knowledge.

ii) the discovery of "*ἄμεινον*" and the authoritative implications of *σαφές* and *τετελεσμένον* in connection with the publication of Xenophanes' account

Xenophanes refers to "what is better" in B18, without defining however what in his view qualifies as *ἄμεινον*. Nor does he attach the proposition he articulates about the possibilities open to human intelligence explicitly to himself. It is only when one views fragment B18 in light of fragment B34 that it is perhaps possible to clarify the concept of *ἄμεινον*, and to throw some light upon the way in which Xenophanes understood his personal expertise in connection with it.

> καὶ τὸ μὲν οὖν σαφὲς οὔ τις ἀνὴρ ἴδεν οὐδέ τις ἔσται
> εἰδὼς ἀμφὶ θεῶν τε καὶ ἅσσα λέγω περὶ πάντων.
> Εἰ γὰρ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα τύχοι τετελεσμένον εἰπών,
> αὐτὸς ὅμως οὐκ οἶδε. Δόκος δ' ἐπὶ πᾶσι τέτυκται.

The exact sense of the key terms *σαφὲς* and *δόκος* is hotly debated. The general tendency is to translate *σαφές* as "truth" or as "clear, certain truth", and *δόκος* as "opinion" or "belief".[74] Regardless of the fact that these senses

[74] Cf., e.g., Fränkel (1951): „klar gesehen" and „Annehmbarkeit" and (1925, p. 184) „Wahrheit" and „Wahn"; Lesher (1991, p.20 and 1978, p. 1): „truth and „belief or seeming"; Burnet (1930, p. 121): "certain knowledge" and "fancy" (based on B35's *δεδοξάσθω*); Guthrie (1965, p. 395): "certain truth" and "opinion"; Barnes (1987, p. 138) "clear truth" and "belief" (he also reads *ἐπὶ πᾶσι* as masculine); Freeman (1953,

appear somehow to refer to the same sense of "knowledge-truth", it is important to distinguish between these possible readings, because they imply a different posture of authority.

Parallel cases from Homeric poetry encourage the translation of *σαφές* as "certain truth". C. J. Classen pointed out, however, that Homer uses *σάφα* and not *σαφές* with this sense.[75] Homer, furthermore, uses *σάφα* in order to describe the *way* in which one knows, i.e. with certainty.[76] It then becomes apparent that in Homer's use of the word the stress lies in the certainty with which one knows and not in the nature of the knowledge he holds. Xenophanes on the other hand, uses *σαφές* not in order to refer to the manner in which knowledge is held, but in order to register knowledge as the authoritative object of personal thought, as suggested by the phrase *σαφές ἴδεν*. It then becomes apparent that for Xenophanes *σαφές* is not a *way* of knowing but knowledge itself.[77] *Σαφές* possibly retains in fragment B34 its Homeric sense, for which Xenophanes nonetheless provided a new orientation, since he identified it with the product of personal insight.

Σαφές, and not *σάφα*, is also attested in Pindar with the sense of what is "real" and, consequently, "true", and we should therefore accept some

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p. 33): "certain truth" and "opinion (seeming)"; KRS (1983, p. 180): "truth" and "seeming" (indifferent to the genre of *ἐπὶ πᾶσι*); McKirahan (1994, p. 66): "truth" and "belief" (also indifferent to the genre of *ἐπὶ πᾶσι*); Popper (1998, p. 46): "certain truth: sichere Wahrheit" and "web of guesses: Vermutung"; Untersteiner (1956, p. CCXIX): "chiaramente esperimentato" and "il congetturare"; and Pasquinelli (1976): "essata verità" and "sapere apparente". Sextus' interpretation here that *σαφὲς μὲν ἔοικε λέγειν τἀληθὲς καὶ τὸ γνώριμον* and *δόκον δὲ τὴν δόκησιν καὶ τὴν δόξαν* is hardly helpful (*Advs. math.*, 7.50.1).

[75] As pointed out also by Classen (1989, p. 100).

[76] Cf. B 252: *οὐδέ τί πω σάφα ἴδμεν, ὅπως ἔσται τάδε ἔργα*; E 183: *σάφα δ'οὐκ οἶδ' εἰ θεός ἐστιν*; and Δ 730: *ἐπιστάμεναι σάφα θυμῶι*. Cf. also: O 632; ϒ 201; β 108; and ω 404. The sense given in the "Lexicon des frühgrieschen epos" (1956) is that of "*ἀκριβῶς*", "*ἀληθῶς*", and "*ἀσφαλῶς*": genaue klare Weise nur bei Verben des Wissens, Könnens"; cf. also, Pind. *Isth.* 7.27: *ἴστω γὰρ σαφὲς*.

[77] In Homeric poetry on the other hand a similar use of *σαφές* is attested only once.Cf. Hymn. Hom., *In Merc.*, 208: *σαφὲς δ' οὐκ οἶδα.*

relevance of *σαφές* with truth.[78] In Aeschylus, however, it is regularly used of a *λόγος* presented to a person of the drama in order to describe its making sense to the one who hears it. In this case the epithet *σαφής* refers to the comprehensive quality of an account.[79] In addition, *σαφές* retains, furthermore, the sense of "being intelligent" later in Plato.[80] It then seems that *σαφές* could be used in Xenophanes' time in order to imply not just the ability to express a real truth but also the ability to *discern* what is true in the first place. It is nonetheless implied in the English translation of *σαφές* as "clear-truth", provided that one accepts by "clear" the intellectual ability of recognising that which is true.

Now, the pairing of *σαφές* with *οἶδα*, or with other words which signify knowledge, is not wholly unusual. However, Xenophanes pairs *σαφές* with *ἴδεν*, which may also imply the faculty of vision. This expression is an odd one but not unparalleled. In Aeschylus' *Supplices*, for example, the Chorus retorts to Atossa: *ξυνῆκας, ὤμμάτωσα γὰρ σαφέστερον*.[81] In this case, the phrase "to see the *σαφές*" stands for "to *realise* the *σαφές*", which signifies an intellectual ability. For this reason it is not exactly safe to translate the phrase *σαφὲς ἴδεν* as "knowing what is true", since it seems that *σαφὲς ἴδεν*

[78] Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 8.45: *σαφὲς οὐκ ἄν εἰδείην λέγειν ποντίαν ψάφων ἀριθμόν*; *Ol.* 8.103: *τά τ' ἐσσόμενα τότ' ἄν φαίην σαφές*. Cf. also *Isth.* 6.20: *τέθμιον σαφέστατον*. It seems however that for Pindar, too, the noun basically retains the Homeric echo of "knowing *with* certainty".

[79] Cf. Aesch. *Suppl.*, 930: *ἐννέπω σαφέστερον*; *Choeph.* 767: *λέγ' αὖθις, ὡς μάθω σαφέστερον*; and *Pers.* 705: *κλαυμάτων λήξασα τῶνδε καὶ γόων, σαφές τί μοι λέξον*, i.e. something which will make sense to me, something other than your incomprehensible cry. Whenever Homer combines *σαφές* with words which signify *λόγος*, *σαφές* still means "true" and not "comprehensible", cf. Δ 404: *μὴ ψεύδε' ἐπιστάμενος σάφα εἰπεῖν*; and ϱ 106: *νόστον σοῦ πατρὸς σάφα εἴπεμεν, εἴ που ἄκουσας*. Cf. also, β 31 and β 43. Pindar uses the word once in order to denote critical ability. Cf. *Nem.* 11. 43-5: *ἐκ Διὸς ἀνθρώποις σαφὲς οὐχ ἕπεται τέκμαρ.*

[80] Cf. Ast (1908), *sub σαφής:* "perspicuous, manifestus, clarus, evidens; certus". Although for Plato the word does not have the same bearing which it obviously has for Xenophanes, cf. *Leg.* 11 921b; and *Phaed.* 69D.

[81] Cf. *Suppl.* 467. Cf. also the expression *φρὴν ὠμματωμένη* (*Ch.* 854), a mind furnished with eyes, i.e. capable of realising exactly because it is capable of seeing.

does not so much refer to the stage of "knowing" but to the stage of *perceiving* knowledge. This distinction is a subtle one, albeit significant. It is thus better to understand the phrase *σαφὲς ἴδεν* as the intellectual *ability* to discern what is true from what is not.

This encourages us to understand *σαφές* in connection with *ἐφευρίσκουσιν* of fragment B18, since both words have an intellectual quality. If this is true, then Xenophanes implies that his expertise was conditioned by inquiry (*ζήτησις*, B18), which was carried out with personal reflection (B34). In addition, the careful ordering of the words in fragment B34 shows that *σαφές* corresponds to *τετελεσμένον*, and that the two are for Xenophanes inextricably connected. If this is true, then Xenophanes registers *τετελεσμένον* as an inept attempt at expressing the *σαφές*. This impression is further encouraged by the fact that Xenophanes treats both *σαφές* and *τετελεσμένον* as basic verbal features of an account. This is also implied by the fact they are both followed by *λέγων* or *εἰπών*, with which Xenophanes describes the way in which an account is published. Both *σαφές* and *τετελεσμένον*, that is, refer to the verbal qualities which a thought acquires when it is communicated by an individual to the public.

In modern scholarship *τετελεσμένον* is generally construed as "complete" [82] in the sense of "real" or "true".[83] It seems safer, however, to

[82] So according to Heitsch: "*τετελεσμένον* ist das Was Ziel und Absicht erreicht hat"(1966, p. 227), and according to Wöhrle (1993b, p. 9).

[83] Lesher (1978, p. 20): "speaking of the real"; Burnet (1930, p. 121), Freeman (1953, p. 33), and KRS (1983, p. 180): "the complete truth"; Barnes (1987, p. 138): "something that is the case"; Guthrie (1965, p. 395): "what is true"; Popper (1998, p. 46): "the perfect truth" and "vollkommene Wahrheit"; McKirahan (1994): "what is absolutely the case"; Gigon (1945, p. 178): "in vollkommenster Weise das Wikliche zu beschreiben, wie es ist" (but there is no need to translate *τετελεσμένον* as an adverb); Mansfeld (1983, p. 211) "vollkommensten"; Fränkel (1925, p. 184): "allervollendeste"; and Pasquinelli (1976): "una cosa compiuta". The only translation that lays emphasis not so much on the quality of "truth" but on its uttering is that of Untersteiner (1956, p. CCXIX): "è riuscito a esprimere nel mondo migliore la realità".

accept that *τετελεσμένον* keeps in Xenophanes the Homeric meaning of "complete". The reason for this is that, if we understand *τετελεσμένον* as "real", then what Xenophanes says in fragment B34 amounts to absurdity. If Xenophanes really considered *τετελεσμένον* as "true", that is, then what possible reason would he have in openly excluding it completely from the communication of the *σαφές*? It must then be that Xenophanes means something else when he refers to *τετελεσμένον*, and that he uses it with its standard sense of "complete".

In addition, the example of *δόκος* shows that Xenophanes could employ opinion-vocabulary, whenever this was his intention. It therefore seems unlikely that he would use a word as ambiguous as *τετελεσμένον* in order to denote by *implication* what is "falsely true".[84] Nor is *τετελεσμένον* attested with the sense of "false belief" in Greek literature. The possibility thus remains that it is better to understand *τετελεσμένον* as a defiant feature in the way in which an account is communicated. Seen in this light, Xenophanes uses *τετελεσμένον* in order to describe that particular characteristic, which some accounts have, and which makes them give the impression to their audience that they are consistent and ordered, i.e. "complete". *Τετελεσμένον* thus refers to the way in which a personal view is communicated and not as much to its truth-value. If this is true, then Xenophanes launches an attack against other individuals, who also laid a claim to a status of authority.

Lesher suggested that *τετελεσμένον* implies an attack on the prestige of oracles and of the diviners. He argues in his examination that

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He is also the only one who understands *σαφές* as "chiaramente esperimentato", i.e. as the *expression* of what is true.

[84] Fränkel on the other hand took the phrase *τετελεσμένο εἰπών* as synonymous to *τὸ ὄν εἰπών*, i.e. as speaking the truth (1925, p. 188). So also for Luther who understood *τετελεσμένον* as a "Bezeichnung für Wahrheit, Wirklichkeit"(1958, p. 84), and Wöhrle (1993b, p. 9). The point here is that *τετελεσμένον* could not have for Xenophanes the sense of "true", because it is attributed to those who are deceived.

τετελεσμένον should be viewed in connection with its Homeric use. In Homer, that is, *τετελεσμένον* bears the sense of "speaking that which has been brought about or will be brought about", which Lesher identifies with the major function of divination. In his view, the point which Xenophanes wishes to make in fragment B34 is that even those who are supposed to know in fact know nothing at all.[85] Lesher's interpretation is attractive, because it defends Xenophanes' desire to compete with other prestigious experts. This view is further supported by Cicero's testimony, according to which Xenophanes was interested in criticising the art of divination.[86]

However, Homer uses *τετελεσμένον* in this sense in order to refer to a speech which is uttered, and he does not use it in these of "realisation of a prophecy", as Lesher's analysis conveniently assumes.[87] In addition, there is nothing in fragment B34, which encourages such a reading of *τετελεσμένον*. Quite on the contrary, Xenophanes refers to *ἀνήρ* in the first line, something which implies that he makes a general statement about human knowledge and not about the knowledge of a specialised group.[88] If Xenophanes really intended to attack the reliability of a specific type of expertise, then it is odd that he does not openly acknowledge the kind of expertise which he has in

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[85] Cf. Lesher (1978, p. 12ff.).

[86] Cf. Cic. *de div.* I 3.5 : *divinationem funditus sustulit*.

[87] Lesher bases his case on A 108, in which Agamemnon says to Calchas "*ἐσθὸν δ' οὔτε τι πω εἶπας οὔτε ἐτέλεσσας*". Only that the way in which *τελῶ* is used in this Homeric verse does not so much recall the art of the prophets. It expresses rather the traditional contrast between words and actions, as its contraposition to *εἶπας* indicates. Had it been here used a noun of *τελῶ* in the place of *ἔπος* to complement *εἶπας*, then this line from Homer would provide more adequate support for Lesher's suggestion.

[88] Lesher cites Soph. *OT* 390: *σὺ μάντις εἶ σαφής* (of Teiresias), which in his view proves that Xenophanes uses *σαφές* in order to imply the prophets. Sophocles does not employ *σαφές*, however, in the same sense with Xenophanes, because he refers to the popular understanding of mantic pronouncements as incomprehensible. Cf. also Aesch. *Ag.* 1112-3: *νῦν γὰρ ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων ἐπαργέμοισι θεσφάτοις ἀμηχανῶ*; and Soph. *OT* 439: *αἰνικτὰ καὶ ἀσαφῆ λέγεις*. It is therefore unwise to identify *σαφές* with the core of mantic expertise.

mind, as he does elsewhere for Homer and Hesiod.[89] It then seems that there is no compelling reason to assume that Xenophanes criticises in fragment B34 the art of manticism specifically. At the same time, however, it seems that Xenophanes objects in fragment B34 to the reliability of other accounts, which also claim to disclose the *σαφές* about the gods and *περὶ πάντων*.

The phrase *ἀμφὶ θεῶν καὶ ἅσσα λέγω περὶ πάντων* defines the content of Xenophanes' knowledge (*εἰδὼς*), which fragment B18 encourages us to understand as the product of personal inquiry (*ἐφευρίσκουσιν*). At the same time, Xenophanes states with this phrase to his audience the topic of his hexameters. This phrase is, as Deichgräber put it, a "Thema Stellung".[90] Xenophanes thus declares here his *personal* (*λέγω*) two-fold interest. On the one hand he is interested in examining the nature of the gods (*ἀμφί θεῶν*) and on the other hand he is concerned with *περὶ πάντων*. The former is manifested in his criticism of the way in which the gods were represented in epic poetry, while the latter possibly implies his investigation of the cosmos in his hexameters. Although Xenophanes does not refer explicitly to *φύσις* in his poetry, a considerable amount of his surviving fragment examines the cosmos. In addition, the expression *περὶ πάντων* may perhaps imply the ambition of the first cosmologies to interpret the cosmos as a whole.[91] It should be pointed out, however, that Xenophanes does not present in his

[89] Cf. frs. B9 and B10.

[90] Cf. Deichgräber (1938, p. 19). Scholars generally agree that Xenophanes states with this phrase the topic of his account. Barnes argues that this phrase refers to Xenophanes' theology and natural philosophy, and concludes upon the existence of a "fairly systematic and comprehensive parcel of scientific and philosophical verse" in Xenophanes (1987, p. 84). In the same vein, Jaeger maintains that Xenophanes is here concerned with the presentation of a "Weltanschauung" (1967, p. 39). So also for Gigon (1945, p. 178), and KRS (1983, p. 167). The importance of this phrase is extensively examined by Classen, who reads it as a "programmatic statement" in connection with Xenophanes' wish to lay a claim to a superior status (1989, p. 101).

[91] So according to Fränkel, who observed that Xenophanes "wie die Ionischen Naturphilosophen ein Weltbild konstruiert" (1925, p. 180).

poetry a systematic interpretation of the cosmos. All the same, it is possible to trace in his fragments a recurrent interest in the world.

iii) The authoritative importance of the belief that "to see is to know"

Fränkel made the interesting suggestion that Xenophanes' use of *ἴδεν*, *εἰδώς*, and *οἶδε* in fragment B34, which are etymologically associated, implies the "philosophical" conviction that "to see is to know".[92] This view is attractive for many reasons. To begin with, it is certainly not easy to question the etymological relation of the stem *ιδ-* with the stem *οιδ-*.[93] In Xenophanes' time, furthermore, was still highly valued. This is manifested not only it the example of historiography, but also in the traditional belief of poetry that the Muses are omniscient, because they are omnipresent, i.e. because they can witness everything with their eyes.[94] In fragment B28, furthermore, Xenophanes approaches with a reflective spirit the natural phenomenon of the rainbow-Iris. According to Deichgräber, fragment B28 is a "Vermutung des Wahrscheinlichen" from visual experience.[95] In a similar vein, KRS argue that the testimony A33 possibly suggests a plausible argument from observed facts.[96]

In the previous section it has been argued that *σαφές* is a word which belongs to Xenophanes' intellectual vocabulary, since it refers to the critical

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[92] Cf. Fränkel (1925). The first serious attempt to systematically object to his reading was undertaken by Heitsch (1966, esp., pp. 208-16).
[93] Cf. Smyth (1956, paragr. 795): the stem of the verb means "to find out"; cf. Lat. v*id-eo*. Classen holds that Xenophanes' pairing of these verbs here cannot be coincidental (1989, p. 100).
[94] Puelma thus argued that the skill of the epic poet rested upon "die authentischen Echtkeit eines Augezeugenberichtes" (1989, pp. 67-8). In a similar vein, Heitsch observes that the man on his own knows nothing, whereas the man who is inspired by the Muse, as in the case of epic poetry, knows everything (1966, p. 195).
[95] Cf. Deichgräber (1938, p. 20) but also Lesher, *ad loc*.
[96] Cf. KRS (1983, p. 168).

ability to realise and perceive that which is true. It then seems that its association with *ἴδεν* and *οἶδε* in fragment B34 implies mental apprehension, which in Xenophanes' view relies upon an adequate evaluation of the information, which the senses provide.[97] It is in fact possible to trace in Xenophanes' fragments evidence that he believed in the critical evaluation of the sense data. Xenophanes often refers to ordinary observable experience, from which he proceeds to draw a conclusion.

> A33: ὁ δὲ Ξενοφάνης μίξιν τῆς γῆς πρὸς τὴν θάλασσαν γίνεσθαι δοκεῖ καὶ τῶι χρόνωι ὑπὸ τοῦ ὑγροῦ λύεσθαι, φάσκων τοιαύτας ἔχειν ἀποδείξεις, ὅτι ἐν μέσηι γῆι καὶ ὄρεσιν εὑρίσκονται κόγχαι, καὶ ἐν Συρακούσαις δὲ ἐν ταῖς λατομίαις λέγει εὑρῆσθαι τύπον ἰχθύος καὶ φωκῶν, ἐν δὲ Πάρωι τύπον δάφνης ἐν τῶι βάθει τοῦ λίθου, ἐν δὲ Μελίτηι πλάκας συμπάντων τῶν θαλασσίων. Ταῦτα δέ φησι γενέσθαι, ὅτε πάντα ἐπηλώθησαν πάλαι, τὸν δὲ τύπον ἐν τῶι πηλῶι ξηρανθῆναι.[98]
> B16: Αἰθίοπεές τε <θεοὺς σφετέρους> σιμούς μέλανάς τε
> Θρῆικές τε γλαυκοὺς καὶ πυρροὺς <φασι πέλεσθαι>

Fränkel takes fragment B16 as evidence that Xenophanes explains everything on the basis of everyday experience.[99] This evidence should be nonetheless treated with caution. Xenophanes never fully articulates a coherent method of inquiry. He does not also single out the senses as a reliable or valid source of information, and he never refers explicitly to sense perception. He never spells out a specific method of investigation.[100] All the same, it does seem that he attempts to introduce a new way of knowing, as

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[97] Fränkel thus understands *σαφές* as "Erkenntnis die auf Empirie gegründet ist" (1925, p. 191). Fränkel also observes elsewhere that Xenophanes explains everything on the basis of "Alttags-erfahrungen", which he takes as an "Erweiterung unserer Denkweise" (1951, p. 381). In a similar vein, Luther interpreted *σαφές* as "Wissen das sich auf Autopsie gründet" (1958, p. 82), whereas according to Rudberg Xenophanes was a "scharfer Beobachter" (1948, p. 128).

[98] Cf. B27: *ἐκ γαίης γὰρ πάντα καὶ εἰς γῆν πάντα τελευτᾶι.*

[99] Cf. Fränkel (1925, p. 182).

[100] Deichgräber thus credits Xenophanes with a "Tekmerien-methode" (1938, p. 29). Guthrie on the other hand is sceptical about whether Xenophanes regarded empirical data as trustworthy (1965, p. 397).

this set of fragments suggests.[101] He uses observable facts in order to substantiate his objection to the traditional anthropomorphic representation of the divine. In this way he implies the need for a new way of thinking, as McKirahan observed.[102]

In addition, there is one further important phrase in fragment B34, which is telling for the nature of Xenophanes' authority claims. Xenophanes uses the phrase *αὐτὸς ὅμως οὐκ οἶδε* in order to describe a case of unreliable knowledge. Fränkel interprets this phrase as a statement for that one knows from personal experience.[103] In a similar fashion, Heitsch contends that Xenophanes is here saying that sometimes a view which is regarded as true contradicts ordinary experience.[104] These interpretations propose that for Xenophanes the knowledge which one has must necessarily take into account empiric reality, i.e. what one observes with his own eyes (*αὐτός*). It is possible to read *αὐτός* with a different meaning without however violating the general spirit of Fränkel's and Heitsch's interpretations.

A. Hermann paraphrases this line as follows: "a mortal man may very well stumble upon the truth and speak it, without knowing of course that he did".[105] It is clear that in this case one perceives what he mistakenly considers "true" and not the real truth. This reading is further encouraged by the pairing of *αὐτὸς οὐκ οἶδε* with *εἰ τύχοι*, which implies the randomness with which one commits oneself to a wrong view. Interestingly enough, the idea appears also in Heraclitus and Empedocles.[106] It therefore seems safe to accept

[101] It is for this reason hard to agree with Curd on that Xenophanes completely lacks a method, since the way in which he uses observable experience attests to the opposite (1998, p. 7).
[102] Cf. McKirahan (1994, p. 68).
[103] Cf. Fränkel (1925, p. 187).
[104] Cf. Heitsch (1966, p. 230).
[105] Cf. Hermann (2004, p. 208).
[106] Cf. Heraclitus B1 and Empedocles B2.5: *αὐτὸς δὲ μόνον πεισθέντες, ὅτῳ προσέκυρσεν ἕκαστος*.

that Xenophanes means with *αὐτὸς οὐκ οἶδε* that "he *himself* does not know", i.e. he does not know consciously. In this case he would be unable to provide the reason why his personal belief can stand, when asked to.

If this is true, it then becomes apparent that Xenophanes actually affirms in fragment B34 that knowledge alone is not sufficient for laying a claim to a status of authority. In his view, there must be some correspondence between one's personal belief and observable reality, which can to some extent vouchsafe the validity of his knowledge. Xenophanes did not go as far as to establish a specific method of thinking, he does nonetheless seem to be pointing to the need for a new one. It is then possible to accept Xenophanes as a conscious thinker, despite the fact that he does not have a sophisticated method at his disposal, since in his poetry he raises the question of epistemology and of valid knowing.

It then seems that *σαφὲς* refers to the intellectual ability to discern the truth based upon a critical evaluation of the sense data. If someone fails to pursue knowledge in this way, then he is prone to conceive of a *δόκος*, which is for Xenophanes the exact opposite to *σαφές*. For this reason *δόκος* refers to a view which lacks intelligence and coherence. Some scholars have interpreted the *σαφές-δόκος* contrast as the first step taken towards Parmenides' distinction of the two possible routes of inquiry, namely *ἀληθείη* and *δόξα*.[107] At any event, the noun *δόκος* is an *ἅπαξ εἰρημένον* and its exact meaning is therefore unclear.

[107] So according to Untersteiner (1959, p. CCXXVI), Guthrie (1965, p. 399), Hussey (1972, p. 143), and Popper (1998, p. 136). Dumont understands with this contrast "la distinction entre vérité et opinion" (1988, p. 121), while Gigon understands *σαφές* as "die Währe Erkenntnis" and *δόκος* as "die eigene unmittelbare Auschauung der Dinge" (1945, p. 178). Vamvakas, furthermore, reads a deliberate contrast between the "objektiver Warhheit (*σαφές*) and "subjektiver Gewissheit" (*δόκος*), (2006, p. 141). So also according to Popper (1998, p. 49).

Homer uses *δοκ-* words in order to denote personal belief, regardless of whether this belief is true or not.[108] It is noteworthy that Hesiod, who brought into play the distinction between truth and semblance, did not describe false opinion as *δόξα* but as *ψεύδεα* and *ἐτύμοισι ὁμοῖα*.[109] Although the noun *δόκος* occurs only in Xenophanes, the compound forms of *δόκος* are attested in other writers, from which it is possible to acquire some insight into the sense with which Xenophanes uses *δόκος* in fragment B34.

Homer's word for "hostel" is *ξενοδόκος*, which literally means the "house which accepts guests".[110] In a similar fashion his word for "quiver" is *ἰοδόκος*, which literally means "the case which accepts arrows", i.e. the case in which arrows are placed.[111] Hermes is thus referred to as *πυληδόκος*, which does not so much mean "gate-keeper" as the one who stands at the gates of Hades and receives the souls of those deceased.[112] In addition, Aeschylus uses *ἱεροδόκα* and *ἱκεταδόκος*, with which he describes the one who receives the sacred or the suppliants respectively.[113]

It then seems safe to agree with Fränkel in that *δόκος* stems from *δέκομαι*, which means "to take in" or "to accept".[114] In the context of fragment

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[108] Cf. Z 90: *ὅς οἱ δοκέει χαριέστατος ἠδὲ μέγιστος*; Z 338-9: *δοκέει μοι λώιον ἔσσεσθαι*; I 103: *ἐγὼν ἐρέω ὥς μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἄριστα*; cf. also, M 215, N 735, and Ψ 130. Homer uses this verb in order to denote false belief just once, in κ 415, when the companions of Odysseus mistake Circe's island for their homeland (*δόκησε δ' ἄρα σφίσι θυμός*). He also uses it in the sense of "to decide", thereby implying critical ability. Cf. A 376: *εἰ δ'ὔμιν δοκέει τόδε λωϊτερον καὶ ἄμεινον ἔμμεναι*, i.e. if this looks preferable to you, because you think that it is better, then you will decide to *ἀνδρὸς ἑνὸς βίοτον νήποινον ὀλέσθαι*. Cf. also, β 141.

[109] Cf. *Th.* 27.

[110] Cf. θ 210.

[111] Cf. φ 12; Φ 60; and O 444. See also the word *ἱστοδόκη* in *Hymn. hom*. In Apoll. 504, which means "mast-holder", i.e. a rest which "receives" the mast when it is laid down, and Pindar's *ματροδόκοις* in *Nem.* 7.84.

[112] Cf. *Hom. Hymn.* In Merc. 15.

[113] Cf. Aesch. *Suppl*. 363 and 713 respectively.

[114] Cf. Fränkel (1925, p. 189). The German translation of *δόκος* as "Annahme" is thus more precise. Heitsch on the other hand objected to Fränkel's suggestion and insisted on reading *δόκος* as "unsicher und nur-Meinung" (1966, p. 231 ff.). The possibility of

B34 it is likely that *δόκος* refers to observable experience, which one uncritically "takes in", i.e. accepts as valid although it is not. Seen in this light, it seems safe to accept that Xenophanes uses *δόκος* not in order to express the idea of "false belief" (although this is certainly *also* implied by his statement in fragment B34), but in order to express rather the uncritical, and therefore unjustifiable, acceptance of such a belief as true. This interpretation accords, moreover, with our reading of the preceding phrase *αὐτὸς οὐκ οἶδε*, which was presented above.[115]

It therefore becomes apparent that the *σαφές-δόκος* contrast does not pertain only to a distinction between truth and falsity, as in Hesiod's famous statement. It also implies what human intelligence can perceive as true (*σαφές*) as opposed to the un-thoughtful and un-insightful acceptance of a false belief (*δόκος*). Xenophanes thus advances the truth-semblance contrast of Hesiod one step further, since he views it in connection with one's personal awareness and intelligence. In this way Xenophanes improves the significance which this distinction has in terms of laying a claim to a completely personal status of expert knowledge.

All the same, it is plain to see that Xenophanes does not employ the *σαφές-δόκος* contrast in order to substantiate or to provide a justification for his personal expertise, as one would perhaps expect him to. He simply makes

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understanding *δόκος* as "false opinion" has resulted in regarding Xenophanes as a sceptic. This view originates in ancient tradition. Cf. Sext. *Adv. Math.* 7.48.6; Hippol. *Ref.* 10.7. It is accepted by Barnes on grounds that for Xenophanes "true belief does not guarantee certain knowledge" (1987, p. 139). So also according to McKirahan (1994, p. 67). The sceptical reading of Xenophanes is dismissed by Mansfeld and Steinmetz, who contend that Xenophanes did not completely refuse the possibility of knowing. Cf. 1983 (p. 211) and 1966 (p. 32), respectively. According to Heidel, furthermore, Xenophanes is certainly not a sceptic, because he does not speak in his poetry as someone who does not believe at all in the possibility of knowledge (1943, p. 275).

[115] So also according to Heitsch, who takes the word to mean "unsicher und nur-Meinung", whereby the sense of a positive "Probabilitas" is implied (1966, p. 231, fn. 21).

a general remark about human knowledge.[116] Yet the importance of this contrast lies in that it shows that Xenophanes obviously feels uncomfortable with existing forms of reasoning and of knowledge, the reliability of which he openly questions. However, he does not present a thorough new method which can lead to knowledge. He thus refers exclusively to human knowledge in general and he never associates his personal expertise with his epistemological conclusions. It then follows that Xenophanes fails to construct a precise personal identity of expertise in the way in which he presents himself to his audience. He emphatically denies any relation with other figures of authority, such as athletes, Homer, and Hesiod, but he never succeeds in completely distinguishing himself from these figures on grounds of a specialised method or of other features which established a specialised form of knowledge.

It is also highly unlikely that he understood himself as a member of a specialised group of experts. The surviving evidence from his poetry shows that he felt himself as an independent reformer of religious traditional beliefs. He does not register this concern, however, as a specialised concern of a particular group. He also never acknowledges, either implicitly or explicitly, other like-minded individuals. All the same, Xenophanes cannot be with much ease categorised into any traditional type of authority of his time. His importance as an individual authority lies in his attempt to *indicate*, though not to establish, a new area of concern.

[116] Classen takes B34 as a direct attack on poets and philosophers (1989, p. 101). This fragment certainly has a polemic character, but against whom in specific in particular it is too hard to tell from the surviving text.

πρὸς θεῶν εἰδότες
οὔτε κακὸν οὔτ'ἀγαθόν
Mimnermus, fr. 2

Chapter III: Heraclitus

Heraclitus is certainly more focused upon the investigation of cosmic reality than Xenophanes. His fragments also present us with a special case, because he is the only thinker examined here, who made use of the medium of prose. The kind of prose which Heraclitus composed, however, is quite distinct in its own right. His fragments consist of brief statements of truth, and resemble apophthegms and oracular responses. In addition, there is no textual evidence which indicates a specific sequence of the fragments, and each fragment is comprehensible even when read alone. The lack of a firm context for these fragments makes it particularly hard to decide their meaning categorically. The immediate result of this is that every interpretation of Heraclitus has to assume an arranging and ordering of the fragments, which makes sense, when viewed from a certain standpoint.

1. The book of Heraclitus

Ancient tradition credits Heraclitus with the composition of a treatise titled *Περὶ Φύσεως*. This testimony cannot be taken into serious account, however, because ancient scholars generally tend to attribute such a treatise to nearly every early thinker.[1] At the same time, it is important to note that

[1] Diogenes and Aristotle make a mention a *βιβλίον* or *σύγγραμμα*, which was written by Heraclitus, which Diogenes divides into three sections: *περί τοῦ παντός*, *πολιτικόν*, and *θεολογικόν* (cf. Diog. Laert. *Vit.* IX.V; and Arist. *Rhet.* 1407b11). In Diogenes' testimony Heraclitus deposited his work at the temple of Artemis in Ephesus (*ibid*. IX. VI), while this book was apparently available till the time of

there are some words in the fragments of Heraclitus which seem to imply coherence in the exposition, while the first fragment gives the obvious impression that it has an introductory quality. This is a hardly substantial piece of evidence that Heraclitus composed a book, especially when taken alone.

It seems that the brevity of expression and the apophthegmatic style was a conscious choice of Heraclitus, and that it constitutes an essential feature of his personal style. It is perhaps in light of this that H. Cherniss distinguished Heraclitus' style from the Ionian historiographic prose. He observed in his analysis that while Heraclitus' sayings are not connected by any immediately obvious logical transitions, historiographic prose makes a good use of continuity and of systematic exposition.[2]

The style which Heraclitus adopts in the surviving fragments encourages the impression that even if he ever composed a book, it did not have the form of a discursive treatise. It seems reasonable to assume that it was at best a compilation of his personal insights, which was fashioned according to the collections of the sayings of the Sages. C. Poster and C. Kahn have thus understood Heraclitus' style as an example of gnomic prose, which was largely influenced by the kind of expression which is used in proverbs.[3]

As far as the way in which Heraclitus published his cosmology is concerned, it seems safe to accept that he presented them to a live audience. KRS have thus maintained that the fragments of Heraclitus do not so much resemble extracts from a continuous written work, but that they give the impression that they are oral apophthegms.[4] In a similar vein, G.S. Kirk held that Heraclitus presented his views orally before they were committed to

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Socrates, who having read it famously remarked that in order to comprehend its content one must be at least as skilful as a Delian swimmer (*ibid*. XII).

[2] Cf. Cherniss (1951, p. 330).

[3] Cf. Poster (2006, p. 16) and Kahn (1979, p. 7).

[4] Cf. KRS (1983, p. 184).

writing.[5] In the introduction, furthermore, we have noted that the surge of literacy in 5th century Greece did not alter considerably the nature of communication, since the live performance of a text remained the main vehicle for publication.

According to Kahn, however, Heraclitus' fragments bear internal signs that they were intended for an audience of readers rather than of listeners. In his view, this is mainly manifested in Heraclitus' taste for ambiguity, which requires a reading and often a re-reading of the fragment in privacy in order for one to grasp the hidden meaning. The same is also suggested, Kahn goes on to argue, by the accuracy and occasional perplexity which characterises the expression of Heraclitus.[6] There is indeed much reason in Kahn's suggestion, but this interpretation is challenged by the conclusions of R. Thomas' very recent study on archaic literacy and orality.[7] It seems safe to accept that some elements of Heraclitus' style apparently suggest that he composed with the aid of writing. At the same time, however, our knowledge about archaic communication encourages the view that his work was published chiefly, though not exclusively, through live performance.

This impression is further reinforced by the fact that Heraclitus frequently describes in his fragments communication in terms of listening and of speaking, as Lesher also points out in his examination,[8] and as suggested by the following fragments:

> B1: καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον...πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἐργων

[5] Cf. Kirk (1954, p. 36).

[6] Cf. Kahn (1983, pp. 116-7).

[7] For which see the relevant section of the introduction.

[8] Cf. J. H. Lesher (1981, p. 7). Guthrie takes the phrase *τοῦ λόγου ἀκούσαντες* in fragment B1 to imply Heraclitus' conviction that the *λόγος* exists independently from the one who expresses it (1965, p. 425, and p. 434). This may be perhaps concluded from B108 but not from fragment B1. It is more likely that Heraclitus is referring in the opening of his work to the first encounter of his audience with his *λόγος*, as what follows in this fragment further indicates.

B19: ἀκοῦσαι οὐκ ἐπιστάμενοι οὐδ' εἰπεῖν
B34: ἀξύνετοι ἀκούσαντες κωφοῖσιν ἐοίκασι...
B55: ὅσων ὅψις ἀκοὴ μάθησις, ταῦτα ἐγὼ προτιμέω...
B87: βλάξ ἄνρθωπος ἐπὶ παντὶ λόγῳ ἐπτοῆσθαι φιλεῖ
B101a: ὀφθαλμοὶ τῶν ὤτων ἀκριβέστεροι μάρτυρες
B107: κακοὶ μάρτυρες ἀνθρώποισιν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ὦτα...
B108: ὁκόσων λόγους ἤκουσα...

This set of fragments shows that Heraclitus considered important both the skill of speaking wisely as well as of listening carefully.[9] The latter obviously refers to the audience of Heraclitus, who can gain access to a higher knowledge, such as the one which he discloses, provided of course that they pay heed to what Heraclitus has to say. It is for this reason, furthermore, that Heraclitus mentions in fragments B55, B101a, and B107 the ears together with the eyes as possible sources of acquiring knowledge.

In addition, written works normally included in their opening the name of their author. This would guarantee for that the authorship of the work would be handed down to future generations or when transferred to other cities, as for example in the following openings of prose works:

Hecataeus: Ἑκαταῖος ὁ Μιλήσιος ὧδε μυθεῖται...
Herodotus: Ἡροδότου Θούριου ἱστορίης ἀπόδειξις ἥδε...
Thucydides: Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε...

Although it is possible that Heraclitus used such a seal of authorship in the opening of his work, it seems unlikely that such a seal is for us completely lost. Perhaps the book of Heraclitus did not have such a seal, exactly because it was circulated by the author *himself* in a small gathering.[10] The same is perhaps also implied by the fact that Heraclitus uses the unusual *διηγεῦμαι* in

[9] For an examination of these two skills in Greek culture, see Robb (1983b, p. 156, and p. 159 in connection with Heraclitus' style).
[10] For an analysis of this issue, see the relevant section in the introduction.

his introductory fragment, while Hecataeus for instance uses *γράφω*, which immediately points towards communication through writing.[11]

It is also important to point out that Heraclitus is the first thinker under examination, who openly registers cosmological inquiry as a valid topic for an account, as clearly stated in fragment B1:

> Τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος ἀεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον. Γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε ἀπείροισιν ἐοίκασι, πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων, ὁκοίων ἐγὼ διηγεῦμαι κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅκως ἔχει. Τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους λανθάνει ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ποιοῦσιν, ὅκωσπερ ὁκόσα εὕδοντες ἐπιλανθάνονται.

With this fragment Heraclitus apparently introduces himself to his audience. It is therefore only natural to find here the key features of his thought, which potentially distinguish him from others, but also important information about the way in which he understands and attempts to put across his personal expertise and superiority. In fragment B1 Heraclitus discloses the two most prominent features of his thought. He refers to the new concept of the cosmic *λόγος*, according to which everything in the world occurs (*γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε*), and which he immediately associates with *human* intelligence (*ἀξύνετοι*).[12]

It then becomes apparent that Heraclitus openly states in the opening of his work the topic of his discussion: it is an examination of the essence of the cosmic *λόγος*. Unlike Xenophanes, furthermore, Heraclitus appears to have a more clear understanding of the content and focus of the superior

[11] Kahn takes *ἐπέων διηγεῦμαι* as a phrase, which is synonymous to the phrase *τὰ ἀληθέα λέγειν* (1979, p. 121). This suggests that Heraclitus aims with his account in disclosing what in his view is true. In a similar vein, Marcovich has proposed that *κατὰ φύσιν* of B1 is an alternative expression for *ὅκως ἔχει*, while *διαιρέων* is equivalent to *φράζων*, which forms a chiasmus (1967, p. 7).

[12] For the use of words denoting intelligence in Heraclitus, see also table VII in the Appendix.

knowledge, which he reveals to his audience. He also appears to be more self-aware of that the investigation of the cosmos can constitute a substantial domain of knowledge, on grounds of which expertise can be claimed.

In addition, the fact that Heraclitus views the importance of his message in connection with personal intelligence, speaks volumes about the specialty of his expertise and the manner of his self-projection as an individual who is worth public attention. It implies in other words the reason why he considered his message to be of such great importance. Heraclitus also establishes in fragment B1 a sharp contrast between *ἐγὼ* and *οἱ ἄλλοι*, as K. Reinhardt has pointed out.[13] This contrast occurs frequently in Heraclitus' fragments, to the examination of which we shall now turn.

2. Heraclitus and the others

i) Heraclitus against mankind

Heraclitus frequently remarks upon the way in which men fail to perceive that which is true.[14]

> B2: τοῦ λόγου δ' ἐόντος ξυνοῦ ζώουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ὡς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν
> B17: οὐ γὰρ φρονέουσι τοιαῦτα πολλοί, ὁκόσοι ἐγκυρεῦσιν, οὐδὲ μαθόντες γινώσκουσιν, ἑωυτοῖσι δὲ δοκέουσι
> B70: παίδων ἀθύρματα νενόμικεν [sc. Ἡράκλειτος] εἶναι τὰ ἀνθρώπινα δοξάσματα
> B72: ὧι μάλιστα διηνεκῶς ὁμιλοῦσι λόγῳ τῶι τὰ ὅλα διοικοῦντι, τούτῳ διαφέρονται, καὶ οἷς καθ' ἡμέραν ἐγκυροῦσι, ταῦτα αὐτοῖς ξένα φαίνεται
> B73: οὐ δεῖ ὥσπερ καθεύδοντας ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ τότε δοκοῦμεν ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν.

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[13] Cf. Reinhardt (1916, p. 217). According to Reinhardt *οἱ ἄλλοι* is "im stärksten Gegensatze zu dem hervogehobenen *ἐγώ*".

[14] See also Table II in the Appendix, for the vocabulary which Heraclitus uses, when he refers to error or false belief.

This set of fragments illustrates that what men fail to perceive according to Heraclitus is the nature of the cosmic *λόγος*, although it is for Heraclitus potentially graspable. Heraclitus thought that men live unconsciously and that they believe in their personal point of view (B2, B17), which is nonetheless alienated from the real cosmic principle (B72). This eventually brings about impression rather than true knowledge (B70, B73). It then becomes apparent that Heraclitus considered himself better than the members of his audience, exactly because of his ability to acquire insight into the true nature of the cosmic *λόγος*. The crucial characteristic is that Heraclitus is certainly more specific than Xenophanes about the why he wants to be heard, but also about why he considers himself worthy of public attention. However, although Heraclitus displays some specialisation in terms of his distinct topic of investigation, he does not appear to be aware of cosmological theorising as a distinct area of concern.

At the same time, however, Heraclitus refers to individuals who have different concerns and priorities in their accounts than him, and from whom he nonetheless differentiates his expertise. In most cases the *σοφίη* of these individuals is well-established, and their list is quite impressive:

> B28: καὶ Δίκη καταλήψεται ψευδῶν τέκτονας καὶ μάρτυρας
> B40: πολυμαθίη νόον ἔχειν οὐ διδάσκει. Ἡσίοδον γὰρ ἂν ἐδίδασκε καὶ Πυθαγόρην αὖτίς τε Ξενοφάνεά τε καὶ Ἑκαταῖον
> B56: ἐξηπάτηνται οἱ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς την γνῶσιν τῶν φανερῶν παραπλησίως Ὁμήρῳ, ὅς ἐγένετο τῶν Ἑλλήνων σοφώτερος πάντων.
> B57: διδάσκαλος δὲ πλείστων Ἡσίοδος. Τοῦτον ἐπίστανται πλεῖστα εἰδέναι, ὅστις ἡμέρην καὶ εὐφρόνην οὐκ ἐγινωσκεν. Ἔστι γὰρ ἕν.
> B58: οἱ γοῦν ἰατροί, φησὶν ὁ Ἡράκλειτος, τέμνοντες, καίοντες, πάντη βασανίζοντες κακῶς τοὺς ἀρρωστοῦντας, ἐπαιτέονται μηδὲν ἄξιοι μισθὸν λαμβάνειν παρὰ τῶν ἀρρωστούντων, ταὐτὰ ἐργαζόμενοι, τὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰς νόσους.
> B104: τίς γὰρ αὐτῶν νόος ἢ φρήν; Δήμων ἀοιδοῖσι πείθονται καὶ διδασκάλῳ χρείωνται ὁμίλῳ οὐκ εἰδότες ὅτι «οἱ πολλοὶ κακοί, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἀγαθοί».

> B108: ὁκόσων λόγους ἤκουσα, οὐδεὶς ἀφικνεῖται εἰς τοῦτο, ὥστε γιγνώσκειν, ὅτι σοφόν ἐστι πάντων κεχωρισμένον

Heraclitus explicitly acknowledges in these fragments Homer, Hesiod, Pythagoras, the doctors and the bards, Hecataeus, and even Xenophanes. This characteristic strongly suggests that Heraclitus is unable to perceive of clear boundaries between different areas of expertise, and that he does not consider himself a member of a specialised group of experts. This is most strikingly illustrated by the fact that Heraclitus also distinguishes himself from Xenophanes, although they both apparently shared the same interest in cosmological inquiry.

Fragment B104 in particular shows that what Heraclitus wants from his audience is recognition. The respect in which he claims to differ from other individual experts is stated as the cosmic knowledge which he discloses in his account. Clearly then, what Heraclitus asks from his audience is not only social recognition but recognition as someone who knows the truth about the nature of the cosmos. His cosmic knowledge is what in his view differentiates him from both his audience as well as from other charismatic individuals. It is for this reason, furthermore, that he lays a claim to a special status of insight.

In addition in fragment B108 Heraclitus acknowledges the existence of other cosmological accounts. M. Marcovich observed that the phrase *λόγους ἤκουσα* of B108 clearly implies "teaching" or "doctrines".[15] In the same vein, G.S. Kirk maintained that *λόγους* is likely means "accounts", even perhaps "theories".[16] It is possible to add to this the *μάρτυρας* of fragment B28, which may perhaps also imply other accounts. If these scholarly suggestions are

[15] Cf. Marcovich (1967, *ad* B108).

[16] Cf. Kirk (1954, p. 398-9). Kirk also pointed out that this fragment refers to human and not to divine wisdom. See also Heidel (1980, p. 712). Colli translates "fra tutti coloro le cui espressioni ho ascoltato" (1977, *ad* B108), and Reinhardt "deren Wort er hörte können doch nur die Philosophen gemeint sein" (1916, p. 205). Granger on the other hand interprets *λόγων* as "book of others" (1974, p. 249).

correct, then it seems that in fragment B108 Heraclitus acknowledges other accounts, from which he explicitly differentiates his personal *σοφίη*. In his view, other accounts fail to achieve the status of *σοφίη*, because they do not reach the same level of cosmological understanding with Heraclitus' account, as the phrase *σοφόν ἐστι πάντων κεχωρισμένον* further implies.

What is also remarkable about fragment B108 is that Heraclitus describes his expertise not only in terms of his cosmological knowledge but also in terms of someone who is familiar with other accounts, as suggested by *ἤκουσα*. Heraclitus had some knowledge of other accounts, which he nonetheless considered unreliable. However, his awareness of other accounts never takes the form in the extant fragments of systematic criticism. Heraclitus never actually proves in detail wrong a specific view with which he disagrees. Although he frequently tells his audience that he is different from others, that is, he never explains *analytically* why their views are wrong and never engages in a critical discussion of their theories. This in turn implies that Heraclitus failed to pursue his differentiation from other types of experts in a more specialised manner.

ii) Heraclitus and the Ionian historiographers

C. Kahn interpreted Heraclitus' use of the medium of prose as evidence that he considered himself a historiographer. He argues in his analysis that Heraclitus' choice of prose was dictated by an existing tradition of scientific prose, which was mainly formulated by the historiographers.[17] There is much reason in Kahn's suggestion, since it is possible to trace several similarities between Heraclitus' sayings and the extant fragments of the

[17] Cf. Kahn (1979, pp. 96-7) and (1983, p. 114).

logographers. A second closer look reveals, however, some significant differences.

To begin with, Heraclitus composed a rather distinct kind of "prose", which cannot be with much easy classified as a standard form of expression of any discipline. His style bears considerable similarities with poetic expression rather with Ionian prose, as Kirk rightly observed and as the compiler of the Suda lexicon thought.[18] It seems, that is, that the fragments of Heraclitus are prosaic only in the respect that they are deprived of a metrical structure, although they are not wholly deprived of an inner-rhythm.[19] His fragments may be considered "scientific", furthermore, only insofar as they are focused upon a single topic of investigation.

In addition, it is particularly hard, if not impossible, to detect a sequence in the fragments of Heraclitus. The surviving historiographic fragments on the other hand display some sequence and coherence in their exposition, since they gradually proceed from one point to another. The mastery of Heraclitus' style on the other hand lies in the brevity of his expression, which brings to mind the style normally used in aphorisms and wisdom literature rather than the style of other prose works of his time.

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[18] Cf. Kirk (1954, p. 396). Kirk argues that the language of Heraclitus places him in the tradition of poetic thought. The Suda compiler comments that Heraclitus *ἔγραψε πολλὰ ποιητικῶς*.

[19] This inner-rhythm consists in the use of patterns either of images (e.g. the metaphor of sleep which describes the state of unconsciousness and, hence, ignorance) or of verbal echoes (e.g. the repetition of the same consonant in a phrase, cf. B25). Lesher thus thought that Heraclitus devised a variant of the epic style, because these elements of style made his account easier to remember (1981, p. 7). In a similar fashion, Poster maintained that Heraclitus' style is a middle case between traditional epic expression and the scientific prose of the historiographers (2006, p. 16). It is noteworthy that Heraclitus resorts to epic style in particular, whenever he wants to clarify a cosmological view to the audience. See, e.g., B53. In this fragment the phrase *πόλεμος πατὴρ πάντων* uses a familiar picture from epic poetry in order to illustrate Heraclitus' view about cosmic strife.

Another similarity between Heraclitus and the first historiographers is that both accounts are equally fascinated by etymology. H. Granger thus suggested that the expertise of Heraclitus can well qualify for that of a historiographer.[20] However, Heraclitus' interest in *ὀνόματα* is something more than a matter of mere curiosity, since for Heraclitus the name of an object indicates its *φύσις*. Etymology was thus an important aspect of way in which Heraclitus attempted to investigate the cosmos, because it shows that the cosmic principle of the *λόγος* is intrinsically connected with the human *λόγος*, i.e. human language. It therefore becomes apparent that etymology had a different role and significance in the account of Heraclitus.[21]

In addition, Heraclitus' understanding of etymology related to the special way with which he handled language, as becomes apparent in the following set of fragments:

> B2: ξυνὸς γὰρ ὁ κοινὸς. Τοὺ λόγου δ' ἐόντος ξυνοῦ ζώουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ὡς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν.[22]
> B8: τὸ ἀντίξουν συμφέρον καὶ ἐκ τῶν διαφερόντων καλλίστην ἁρμονίαν
> B10: συνάψιες ὅλα καὶ οὐχ ὅλα, συμφερόμενον διαφερόμενον, συνᾶιδον διᾶιδον, καὶ ἐκ πάντων ἕν καὶ ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντα
> B48: τῶι οὖν τόξῳ ὄνομα βίος, ἔργον δὲ θάνατος

[20] Cf. Granger (1974, p. 239).

[21] The belief that words reflect the real nature of a thing was quite common in Greek culture. In the *Agamemnon*, for example, Aeschylus says that the etymology of Helen's name is the following: Ἑλένη> Ἑλένας > ἑλῶ +ναῦς (lines 682-8). According to this etymology the etymology of Helen's name implies the myth about her and the peril which the Greeks experienced on her behalf in the Trojan war. See also *Pr. Vinct.* 85-6: *ψευδωνύμως σε δαίμονες Προμηθέα καλοῦσιν·αὐτὸν γάρ σε δεῖ προμηθέως, ὅτῳ τρόπῳ τῆσδ' ἐκκυκλισθήση τέχνης*. In these lines Prometheus' character does not correspond to what the etymology of his name implies. The question of etymology is extensively examined in the Platonic dialogue *Cratylus*, in the opening of which it is stated that *ὀνόματος ὀρθότητα εἶναι ἑκάστῳ τῶν ὄντων φύσει πεφυκυῖαν* (383a).

[22] The word *ξυνός* is a word-play on ξὺν + νόος, while it also implies the adjective *κοινὸς*, which Heraclitus contrasts to *ἴδιος*. See also B80, for Heraclitus' view that war (i.e. cosmic reality) is *ξυνός*, and B89 for the view that the world which men perceive with their senses is common (*κοινὸς*) for all.

Fragment B48 in particular leads to the conclusion that, since life and death are combined in a single object (*βίος*), they are one, despite the fact that they are opposite concepts. It then seems that Heraclitus deliberately fashioned his fragments in such a manner that their literary form was a verbal representation of the cosmic reality and, more specifically, of his basic tenet that "all is one", by which he meant that all opposites are one.[23] Although the surviving fragments from historiographic prose are limited, it is still possible to discern that these treatises did not treat human language with the same sensitivity that we find in Heraclitus. It seems that this was a special feature of Heraclitus' style, which distinguishes his fragments not only from those of the historiographers but also from those of other individuals of his time.

It is also worthy of note that despite the fact that we know of some cosmologies which used prose, as in the case of Anaxagoras and Anaximander, it seems that there did not exist a tradition of cosmological prose treatises. This is lucidly manifested in that the first cosmologies made use both of verse and of prose according to the taste, intention, or interest of each individual thinker. This in turn suggests that the first cosmologists did not care to follow any specific tradition in terms of how they would choose to phrase their message. Quite the contrary, they felt free to devise their own style and they were unaware of any specific conventions in the area of their expertise, for which a tradition of style was not yet formulated.

Kahn observed in his analysis that Heraclitus' account and the historiographic fragments lay a claim to the same element of "transparency", by which he understands the effort which the audience has to make in order to look *through* the written word.[24] This is essentially true but it is possible however to trace one crucial difference in the way in which these two

[23] For this principle in Heraclitus, see frs. B32 and B50.
[24] Cf. Kahn (1983, p. 118).

accounts were received by their audience. The audience of the historiographer had to apply their ability to think critically, insofar as they had to decide whether the version of facts which the historiographer presented was plausible or not. It then seems that the ability of the audience to think was in this case associated with an element of "historic" actuality. Heraclitus on the other hand frequently asks his audience to question the reliability and validity of his cosmic truth. Seen in this light, the audience of the historiographer do not have to transcend their ordinary point of view. The audience of Heraclitus was confronted with the challenge to reject, at least to some extent, observable reality in order to grasp the one truth, which lies underneath each visible phenomenon, i.e. the cosmic *λόγος*. This view of Heraclitus about his cosmic truth is manifested in the following fragments:

> B54: ἁρμονίη ἀφανὴς φανερῆς κρείττων
> B123: φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ

In addition, the immediate implication of this view is that Heraclitus evaluated sense data differently from the historiographers. The expertise of the historiographer related to the testimony of eyewitness, whereas Heraclitus put forward a critical appreciation of the information which the senses provide. For this reason, furthermore, his account had a transcendental quality, because it deducts the invisible from the visible in order to acquire an unfailing understanding of the cosmic reality. H. Cherniss thus rightly pointed out in his analysis that the basic difference between Heraclitus and the historiographers is that for Heraclitus the *meaning* of the phenomena is a necessary requirement for the acquisition of wisdom.[25] It then becomes

[25] Cf. Cherniss (1951, p. 332). He also maintains that in B107 Heraclitus states with the phrase *ὀφθαλμοί κακοὶ μάρτυρες* the limitations of the instruments of historiography. In a similar vein Lesher observes the contrast of *νόος* of B40 to *ὄψις* of B55, which in his view implies the information which built up upon sense perception. See also Marcovich, who held that the mention of *βάρβαραι ψυχαί* in

apparent that Heraclitus had a different approach to the question about the reliability of the senses and of observable experience in connection with knowledge.[26]

The expertise of the historiographer had one further essential feature. It seems that the historiographic treatises were compilations of information, which the author collected in his travels to foreign lands.[27] Heraclitus on the other hand never expresses a similar concern in his fragments. Quite on the contrary, he repeatedly associates his *σοφίη* with his ability to reflect upon the cosmic reality and to interpret it according to a single principle. Marcovich has argued, however, that Heraclitus did not dismiss the wisdom of historiography as wholly unreliable, and that he considered it as a stage of knowing which can lead to a true understanding of the cosmos.[28] In his view this is manifested in fragment B35:

Χρὴ γὰρ εὖ μάλα πολλῶν ἵστορας φιλοσόφους ἄνδρας εἶναι

To begin with, it is not beyond any shadow of doubt that this is an authentic fragment, since it is an indirect quotation. At any event, the tone of this fragment is neutral and it does not generally give the impression that it expresses a criticism about a specific type of expert knowledge, such as that of

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B107 implies the unwarranted authority of the historiographer (1983, p. 156). Colli thus translated *πολυμαθίη* of B40 as "ricchezza di esperienza" (1977, *ad* B40).

[26] Kahn thus remarked that "the philosopher must reveal to his readers a world with which they are in some sense already familiar" (1983, p. 120). This is certainly implied by Heraclitus' criticism of other accounts on grounds that *οἷς καθ' ἡμέραν ἐγκυροῦσι ταῦτα αὐτοῖς ξένα φαίνεται* (B72). It should be pointed out, however, that a considerable part of his cosmic *λόγος* does not directly correspond to visible reality.

[27] The connection between wisdom and travelling was common in Greek culture. Odysseus, for example, is the standard mythological figure, the wisdom of whom was understood as the knowledge which he acquired during his wandering. According to Herodotus, moreover, Croesus considered Solon as a wise man, because he travelled *φιλοσφέων καὶ θεωρίης εἵνεκεν* (*Hist*. 1.30.9). The same belief is perhaps suggested by Xenophanes' B8.

[28] Cf. Marcovich (1967, *ad* B35).

the historiographers. It is also questionable, whether *ἴστορες* refers to the historiographers in specific and not to those who are learned and knowledgeable. It then becomes apparent that Heraclitus differs from the historiographers in several crucial respects, especially in terms of the way in which he sought knowledge.[29]

3. The wise *ἕν* and the unwise *πολυμαθίη*

In fragment B40 Heraclitus openly attacks other individuals, who have achieved social recognition.

> Πολυμαθίη νόον ἔχειν οὐ διδάσκει. Ἡσίοδον γὰρ ἂν ἐδίδαξε καὶ Πυθαγόρην αὖτίς τε Ξενοφάνεά τε καὶ Ἑκαταῖον.

The essence of Heraclitus' disagreement with the expertise of these individuals is located in *πολυμαθίη*. The importance of this fragment lies in the fact that Heraclitus explicitly associates knowledge with personal intelligence, as the phrase *νόον ἔχειν* implies. This in turn implies that for Heraclitus wisdom is the product of a theoretical activity. Granger maintained that in fragment B40 Heraclitus wishes to stress the importance of thinking for oneself, which he contrasts to the uncritical acceptance of knowledge which others disclose.[30] It does seem, however, that the major concern of Heraclitus in this fragment is to contrast the knowledge of many different and unrelated truths with the knowledge of a *single* truth, as F.M. Cornford and W.K.C.

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[29] For the view that Heraclitus differs from the historiographers, see also Granger (1974, p. 238) but also Cornford (1957, p. 184). Cornford, however, saw a major difference between Heraclitus' "mystic temperament" and the "Ionian rationalism" of historiography. The mystical quality of Heraclitus is discussed in the following section. It seems hard to accept, however, that in B40 Heraclitus expresses his contempt exclusively for Ionian science and rationalism, because he also refers to individuals, who do not exactly fit this description. It seems that this fragment is a general attack against others.

[30] Cf. Granger (1974, pp. 235-46). Granger then goes on to make the interesting suggestion that with B40 Heraclitus objects to the second-hand learning from the Muse of epic poetry (p. 252).

Guthrie observe in their examinations. Cornford bases his case on the fact that the *πολυ-* compound of the noun *πολυμαθίη* implies a deliberate contrast with the basic Heraclitean tenet that only the *ἕν* is wise.[31] This is not to say, however, that Heraclitus dismissed altogether the knowledge of many different truths. He accepted it as a valid way of knowing provided that these different truths were incorporated into a single scheme. This is manifested in Heraclitus' belief, which he repeats several times in his fragments, that there is only *one* truth and, consequently, only *one* way of knowing and of being wise:

> B32: ἕν τὸ σοφὸν μοῦνον λέγεσθαι οὐκ ἐθέλει καὶ ἐθέλει Ζηνός ὄνομα
> B41: εἶναι γὰρ ἕν τὸ σοφόν, ἐπίστασθαι γνώμην ὁτέη ἐκυβέρνησε πάντα διὰ πάντων
> B29: αἱρεῦνται γὰρ ἕν ἀντὶ ἁπάντων οἱ ἄριστοι
> B108: σοφόν ἐστι πάντων κεχωρισμένον

Fragment B41 in particular very neatly links *σοφία* and *ἕν* with the knowledge of a cosmic principle which regulates every phenomenon of reality. In fragment B108, furthermore, Heraclitus explicitly associates wisdom (*σοφόν*) with cosmic understanding. The Heraclitean notion that only the *ἕν* is wise, may perhaps imply that Heraclitus thought that an account worthy of public attention should be focused upon a single topic of investigation. If this assumption is true, then it seems that Heraclitus is trying to promote in B40 a more specialised form of knowledge. At any event, what is specifically remarkable about fragment B40 is that Heraclitus does not attack individuals, who belong to the same group of experts, and who share the same concerns in their accounts. This in turn implies that Heraclitus could

[31] Cf. Cornford (1957, p. 186) and Guthrie (1965, p. 415). The contrast between the knowledge of many different things, but worthless, and the knowledge of one, but useful, was a favourite one for the Greeks. Cf., e.g., Arch. Fr. 20W: *πόλλ' οἶδ' ἀλώπηξ, ἄλλ' ἐχῖνος ἕν μέγα*; Aesch. Fr. 286Sn: *ὁ χρήσιμ' εἰδὼς, οὐχ ὁ πολλ' εἰδὼς σοφός*, and Margit. 46: *πολλά ἠπίστατο ἔργα, κακῶς δ' ἠπίστατο πάντα*.

not distinguish fixed borders of expertise. It also suggests that he does not perceive himself as a member of a specific group. This is lucidly manifested in that he also differentiates himself in fragment B40 from Xenophanes, although they both shared the same interest in discovering the nature of the cosmos.

4. The style of Heraclitus

i) The particularity of Heraclitean language in connection with Heraclitus' desire to lay a claim to a special status of insight

In fragment B93 Heraclitus makes an explicit mention to oracular pronouncements:

> ὁ ἄναξ, οὗ τὸ μαντεῖόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς, οὔτε λέγει οὔτε κρύπτει ἀλλὰ σημαίνει.

The obvious similarity between the way in which Heraclitus describes oracular style in B93 and the language he uses in his fragments has been received as an indication that he understood himself as a prophet. There is indeed much reason in this assumption, especially when taking into consideration the fact that Heraclitus adopts in the extant fragments a very special form of expression, which resembles in several aspects the style normally used in oracular answers. This characteristic gave him in antiquity the nickname *σκοτεινός* or *αἰνικτής*.[32]

W. Guthrie has claimed that the language of Heraclitus "definitely puts him on the side of the inspired". According to his examination, Heraclitus spoke deliberately with symbols, because he did not desire to be understood by the "*profani*", and because he assumed a special kind of audience for his

[32] So according to the Suda compiler, Strabo (*Geog*. XIV.25), pseudo-Aristotle (*de mundo*, 396b7), Timon (*apud* Diog. *Vit*. IX.6), and Aristotle (*Rhet*. 1407b). According to tradition, Socrates commented that in order to comprehend Heraclitus' book one has to be as skilful as a Delian swimmer (Diog. *Vit*. II 22).

cosmological observations.[33] However, Heraclitus never devalues the general ability of mankind to perceive the truthfulness of his message, although he frequently refers with a derogatory tone to the stupidity of men. This becomes apparent from the fact that he states as the basic feature of his *λόγος* the fact that it is common to all, since the ability of critical reflection is inherent in the nature of all men. Heraclitus devises in fact a clever pun on *κοινός* and *ξυνοῦς* in fragment B2, which further elaborates this essential characteristic of the *λόγος*.[34] The same notion is clearly stated in fragment B11, in which Heraclitus remarks that *ξυνόν ἐστι πᾶσι τὸ φρονέειν*. It does not therefore seem safe to accept the view that Heraclitus spoke to his audience as if they were the selected members of a religious sect, for the reason that this assumption violates his fundamental principle that the *λόγος* is common to all.

In addition, it is impossible to agree with Guthrie that the poets and the prophets can be without much trouble placed into the same category of divinely inspired individuals.[35] To be sure, in both cases the ability to contact the divine plays an important role in the process of acquiring knowledge, which was believed to be of a special insight. In the case of the poets, however, the divine patron was not expected to interfere with the verbal form with which the inspired message was communicated to the public. In manticism on the other hand the belief that a god reveals his knowledge through a charismatic individual could be occasionally verbally represented with the use of a more complex language, which was meant to illustrate to the recipient that divine, and therefore unordinary, knowledge was disclosed.

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[33] Cf. Guthrie (1965, p. 415).

[34] Sextus, who quotes this fragment, also interprets it in this way (cf. *Adv. Math.* VII.133).

[35] Cf. Guthrie, *ibid*.

The nature thus of poetic speech does not altogether resemble the chief characteristics of oracular answers.[36] Homer, for example, is very straightforward in the way he talks to his audience and so is Hesiod. There is simply no difficulty when it comes to understanding their stories or their edifying message. So it must be that Heraclitus has in mind the difficulty with which one understands an oracular response, when he makes a connection between his style and the oracular language in fragment B93. He is for this reason implying the *intellectual* effort which one has to make in order to perceive the truth he wishes to make known.

ii) Fr. B101 and Heraclitus' attempt to establish a method

In fragment B101 Heraclitus makes the following statement: *ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωυτόν*. This phrase has been commonly viewed in connection with the way in which Heraclitus sought to acquire knowledge,[37] and as such it has been treated as evidence that he laid a claim to the status of the inspired prophet. It is important to distinguish, however, between the two possible ways in which knowledge could be inspired into an individual. Either an alien divine spirit would interfere with the capacity of his understanding (as in the case of the Pythia or of the epic poets) or the spirit of the individual would depart from his body in order to acquire a more clear perception of things (as in the case of shamans).

The declaration which Heraclitus makes in fragment B101 does not correspond to any of these two categories of inspired knowledge. He never tells us that a divine agent assisted him in his discovery of the truth about the cosmos and, of course, he never describes in his fragments a personal

[36] See also in the relevant section in the introduction, for a more detailed examination of this issue.

[37] That *δίζημαι* refers to Heraclitus' methodology is also perhaps suggested from that Parmenides uses the noun *δίζησις* in order to describe the two possible ways of inquiry (cf. B2.8, 6.10, and 7.2).

experience of his soul leaving his body. Quite on the contrary, he repeatedly stresses the importance of that the knowledge he presents is the product of his entirely personal speculation. It does not therefore seem likely that Heraclitus understood his cosmological findings as some form of divinely inspired knowledge. This in turn implies that he was not, intentionally at least, a religious thinker.

According to Guthrie, Heraclitus applied in his speculation about the cosmos the method of "inward inspiration".[38] In the case of inspired knowledge, however, the ability of the individual to know is enhanced by someone *else*, namely a god. This view, moreover, is biased by the modern notion that there is an element of mysticism and a hint of religiousness in introspective speculation and esoteric thinking. In fragment B101, however, Heraclitus explicitly associates the knowledge he has managed to acquire with his personal effort.

The spirit of this statement is not in fact unparalleled in Greek literature. Phemius thought of himself as someone who is *αὐτοδίδακτος*, whereas Pindar praised in one of his odes the wise man who has learned many things *φυᾷ*.[39] Both cases stress the importance of personal contribution in the possession of a certain wisdom or knowledge. The crucial difference, however, between the two and Heraclitus' fragment B101 lies in that Heraclitus states personal responsibility as a vital aspect of his method. It then becomes apparent that personal inquiry is closely connected for Heraclitus, as perhaps also for Xenophanes (B18), with the process of acquiring insight into the true nature of the world.[40]

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[38] Cf. Guthrie (1965, p. 414).

[39] Cf. χ 347 and *Ol*. II.86 respectively.

[40] For the view that the knowledge implied in B101 refers to cosmological understanding, see Guthrie (1965, pp. 416-7) and Marcovich (1967, *ad loc*.). Guthrie thus identifies Heraclitus' method with "self-search". He also reads in this statement Heraclitus' attempt to distinguish his method from that of *ἱστορίη* or of other

The verb *δίζημαι* which Heraclitus uses in B101 was not normally used in connection with the discovery of knowledge. This suggests that with the use of an unusual verb Heraclitus is trying to point towards a new way of thinking. The sense of this verb is not unclear; it means "to find".[41] In most cases in which *δίζημαι* occurs with this sense, moreover, it is always followed by a direct object in accusative, which is presented as the result of the activity of searching. This result is always identified with an existing object, and in most cases it is a tangible item.[42]

Seen in this light, it *prima facie* seems reasonable to accept as plausible the suggestion, which some scholars have made, that what Heraclitus discovered through his questioning was his own self. H. Granger, for example, thus maintains that for Heraclitus "self-knowledge provides a path to cosmic knowledge", while Guthrie contended that for Heraclitus "knowledge was exemplified equally fully in oneself".[43] In a similar fashion,

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polymaths, such as Pythagoras. It seems likely that this fragment had an important polemical value against other experts.

[41] Cf. Δ 88=E 168, N 760; Hes. *Op*. 427-9; Theogn. 1.83 and 1.415; Hdt. *Hist*. 1.67, 1.139, 2.156, and 3.41.

[42] Cf. α 261: *φάρμακον διζήμενος*; π 239: *διζησόμεθ' ἄλλους*; *Hymn. hom*. Merc., 191, 262 and 370: *βοῦς διζήμενος*, Theogn. 1.183: *κριοὺς μὲν καὶ ὄνους διζήμεθα*; 1.403: *κέρδος διζήμενος*; Anacr. 15.2: *δίζημαί σε*; Hippocr. *Epist*. 17.63*: ἴδιον ἢ ἐπιδήμιον πρῆγμα διζήμενος*; 17.80: *χολῆς δὲ διζήμενος φύσιν καὶ θέσιν*; 17.248: *διζήμενος αἰτίην*; and Hdt. *Hist*. 7.16: *πλέον τι δίζησθαι ἔχειν*. It could be also loosely applied in order to denote "to look for" in the sense of "to desire to accomplish", cf. λ 100: *νόστον δίζηαι*; ψ 253: *νόστον διζήμενος*; Simon. fr. 37.121: *τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι δυνατὸν διζήμενος*; Bacchyl. *Epin*. 1.176: *τὰ φεύγοντα δίζηνται κιχεῖν*; and Hippocr. *Epist*. 17. 191: *διζήμενοι τὰ μὴ συμφέροντα*. Herodotus also uses the verb once in the sense of "to ask someone to do something" (9.44: *ἐδίζητο τοῖσι στρατηγοῖσι ἐς λόγους ἐλθεῖν*), and once in the sense of "to require" (4.30: *προσθήκας γὰρ δὴ μοι ὁ λόγος ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐδίζητο*). Herodotus also uses *δίζημαι* in order to describe the process of inquiring the oracle (cf. e.g. 7.142), from which Guthrie concludes that Heraclitus is referring in B101 to intuitive knowledge (1965, p. 417). However, this is not the only sense of *δίζημαι*, which Herodotus knows. He also employs it in a way similar to that of Parmenides in order to denote the inquiry aimed at the discovery of truth (cf. 4.151 and 5.54, and Parmenides fr. B7.2.

[43] Cf. Granger (1974, p. 257) and Guthrie (1965, p. 417). The same view is also implied by Colli's translation of B101: "tentai di decifrare me stesso" (1977, *ad* 101).

Cherniss held that in Heraclitus' method "introspection is a way of gaining knowledge about reality".[44] The immediate implication of these suggestions is that Heraclitus perhaps associates in fragment B101 his method of cosmic investigation with moral obligation, and that he therefore phrases a "moral imperative", as Cherniss and KRS maintained in their examinations.[45]

If we accept the reading of a moral tone in fragment B101 as valid, however, then we are bound to deprive Heraclitus of his personal curiosity and of his intelligent questioning of how things are, which characterise his thought and constitute a vital aspect of his expertise. The statements which Heraclitus frequently makes in his fragments give the impression that he considered his insight into the cosmic *λόγος* not so much a matter of ethical command but the product of his intelligent speculation.

In case we accept that Heraclitus proposed a method of cosmological investigation based on self-understanding, then it certainly strikes one as odd that he does not appear to apply this method in any of his fragments, as one would normally expect. It does not therefore seem plausible that he would fail so wrongly to apply his own method. At any event, Heraclitus in the end managed to acquire knowledge not about himself but about the cosmic reality, for which reason he takes particular pride in fragment B1, with which he apparently introduced himself to his audience. In this fragment his personal superiority is described in terms of his ability to know the principle according to which everything in the world occurs and certainly not himself.

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[44] Cf. Cherniss (1951, p. 334).

[45] Cf. Cherniss, *ibid*., and KRS (1983, p. 211). KRS have proposed that Heraclitus' method included a "correct assessment of one's own capacities". This view is attractive and there is no serious reason why it should be dismissed as unreliable. It should be noted, however, that the surviving evidence for Heraclitus' moral teaching is far too limited to allow a safe reconstruction of its content. Kahn, furthermore, suggested that for Heraclitus self-knowledge is a hard task because "a man is divided from himself" (1979, p. 116). We certainly cannot credit Heraclitus with such a high level of sophistication, according to which the subject-I is separated from the object-I.

It therefore becomes apparent that fragment B101 cannot be used as evidence for Heraclitus' mystical outlook. It seems that this fragment was meant to underline the importance of that the cosmic knowledge which Heraclitus presents is the product of his personal endeavour and skill.

iii) the authoritativeness of oracular pronouncements in connection with the authoritative implications of Heraclitus' style

Fragment B101 has encouraged some scholars to understand Heraclitus as the prophet of his *λόγος*.[46] In the introduction it has been noted that inquiring with the purpose of obtaining a higher knowledge was characteristic of oracular manticism. Heraclitus is obviously pointing to this way of knowing in fragment B101. What has not received however the attention it perhaps deserves is that by referring to the consultation of the oracle Heraclitus is at the same time implying the *authority* of oracular wisdom.

In the introduction it has been noted that the case of oracular knowledge was highly esteemed in Greek society, and that it was always taken into serious consideration either in public or in private affairs. The Greeks, furthermore, consulted their gods about important matters. It is also worthy of note that oracular knowledge was the product of a religious experience, since a standard procedure was applied before the inquiry, which took the form of a ritual. However, in fragment B101, which is telling for the nature of Heraclitus' expertise, the interference of the divine in human knowledge is substituted by personal responsibility, as suggested by *ἐμεωυτόν*. It then seems that the point which Heraclitus actually makes in this fragment is a comment on the possibility of human knowledge. It therefore seems unwise to conclude from fragment B101 that Heraclitus considered himself a prophet. He might simply have thought that his method was similar

[46] Cf. e.g. Guthrie (1965, p. 417).

to that used in oracular responses. The purpose of this fragment is to imply to the audience that the message which Heraclitus discloses is important and worthy of their attention. It also implies that the cosmic knowledge which Heraclitus presents is of a similarly high status.

It has been already noted that in fragment B93 Heraclitus expresses openly his admiration for oracular style. The statement which Heraclitus makes in this fragment shows that he consciously shaped his aphorisms according to the model of oracular style.[47] It also suggests that for Heraclitus the basic feature of oracular expression was that it reveals and conceals the truth at the same time, as implied by the *κρύπτει-λέγει* pair.[48] Fragment B32, furthermore, shows that Heraclitus considered the idea of simultaneous concealment and un-concealment central to his expression:

ἓν τὸ σοφὸν μοῦνον λέγεσθαι οὐκ ἐθέλει καὶ ἐθέλει Ζηνὸς ὄνομα

In the introduction we have seen that according to modern scholarly analysis intentional ambiguity was not as prominent a feature of oracular style as frequently assumed. However, fragments B93 and B32 encourage the impression that Heraclitus regarded ambiguous phrasing as an important element of both oracular and of his personal style.[49] He uses this popular, though essentially untrue, belief about oracular responses in order to suggest the difficulty implied in his message, and in order to illustrate the effort which one has to make so as to perceive his cosmic *λόγος*. This idea is manifested in the wording which Heraclitus occasionally chooses. To begin with, a syntactical ambiguity is traced in Heraclitus' first fragment:

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[47] For the view that Heraclitus' style was an intentional choice, see Guthrie (1965, p. 426), Burnet (1932, p. 59), Freeman (1953, pp. 106-7), KRS (1983, p. 185), and Cherniss (1951, p. 330).

[48] Heraclitus' obscurity became proverbial in antiquity. Cf. e.g. Diog. *Vit*. IX.6.

[49] Cf. also Hölscher, according to whose interpretation the basic similarity between Heraclitus' aphorisms and oracular pronouncements is that they both hint at something else than that which they apparently state (1993, p. 273).

τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος ἀεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι[50]

There are mainly two possible ways to construe this phrase, as Aristotle observed: (a) even though this *λόγος* exists *forever*, men are *ἀξύνετοι*, or (b) even though this *λόγος* exists, men are *always ἀξύνετοι*.[51] In this fragment the perplexity to understand is caused by the difficulty to distinguish clearly between two possible meanings. The style thus of Heraclitus is characterised, as Ch. Kahn observed, by "linguistic density" and "meaningful ambiguity".[52]

It seems, furthermore, that the deliberate ambiguous syntax of fragment B1 corresponds to Heraclitus' basic tenet that all things are *one*. By combining multiple meanings into a single phrase, that is to say, Heraclitus devises a style which reflects in its structure the essence of the cosmic truth, which he has perceived. This special way with which Heraclitus treated human language is revealed in one of his perhaps most odd fragments:

τῶι οὖν τόξωι ὄνομα βίος, ἔργον δὲ θάνατος (B48)

The first encounter with this fragment is bound to generate a feeling of perplexity. It is only after one has realised that Homer's word (*ὄνομα*) for "bow" is *βίος*, which also means "life" in a different context, that he starts to grasp the point which is implied in fragment B48. What this fragment eventually states is that life and death, which are two opposite concepts, are

[50] For the view that fragment B1 has a strongly introductive quality, see Gigon (1935, p. 8), KRS (1983, p. 184), Kirk (1954, p. 45), Kahn (1979, p. 7), and Diels (2003, p. 78).
[51] For the ambiguity caused by the lack of punctuation in B1, see Arist. *Rhet*. 1407b11 and Demetr. Phal. *De eloc*. 192. A third possible reading of this fragment is to understand *ἐόντος* as a predicative and to thus translate: "the *λόγος* being this". It is hard to accept, however, that Heraclitus would straightaway begin his exposition by assuming for granted the specific qualities of his *λόγος*, which he later presents.
[52] Cf. Kahn (1979, p. 91). The key idea in Kahn's description of Heraclitean style is that a single word or phrase conveys multiple ideas.

actually the same. The more general principle which is therefore here illustrated is the assumption that all things which men perceive as opposites are one. It then becomes apparent that for Heraclitus the reality of language mirrors the cosmic reality.[53]

It is also worthy of note that this fragment has an impressive argumentative value, since it exemplifies a basic belief of Heraclitus. Of course, this is not a standard way of arguing, and it is quite distinct from the one with which a modern reader is familiar. At the same time, however, it is only plain to see that the medium of prose obviously allows for a more extensive form of reasoning, since it encourages elaboration but also the disjunction or combination of different premises. The same is impossible to achieve in aphorisms. In other words, it is the essence of the style which Heraclitus employs in his fragments that which generates his special form of reasoning. What is in any case remarkable about fragment B45 is that Heraclitus not only employs ambiguity in phrasing his message, but that he also uses ambiguity in order to reach his cosmological conclusion. This in turn suggests that ambiguity was not simply a prominent feature of Heraclitus' style but also a basic element of his thought.

It then becomes apparent that ambiguity took a rather special form in Heraclitus. He used it in order to represent in his account the cosmic polysemy, such as the one of the multiple observable manifestations of the cosmic *λόγος*, with a linguistic multivocity. This is certainly a somewhat more sophisticated handling of language than in average everyday speech. The crucial question to be examined at this point is why would Heraclitus opt for

[53] Detienne has shown in his analysis that the belief that words are intrinsically connected with reality is a basic religious belief used in spells in charms, which he understands as the "performative value" of language (1996, p. 16 ff., but also Foucault 1977, p. 218).

such a style, and how can we interpret his authority claims in connection with this stylistic preference.

Scholars have put forward several explanations for the special features of Heraclitean style. Some have suggested that ambiguity was quite frequent in Heraclitus' age, since it was occasionally employed by other authors of his time such as Aeschylus and Pindar.[54] Others have argued that Heraclitus adopted this kind of style due to his personal admiration for oracular pronouncements, but also because he wanted in this way to claim for himself the authority of the prophet.

According to Guthrie and Cornford, for example, many things in Heraclitus suggest the religious rather than the "philosophic" teacher.[55] In a similar vein, K. Freeman held that Heraclitus phrased his aphorisms like the prophets, because he believed himself to be a "teacher of this kind", and because he accepted prophecy as a valid way of knowing.[56] It is impossible to tell from the surviving fragments, however, whether Heraclitus valued prophetic activity as a reliable source of knowledge. It would be also wrong, furthermore, to understand fragment B93 together with Freeman as a comment on the trustworthiness of oracular wisdom. It seems more plausible to accept that this fragment is a comment on the model of communication used in oracles and, more specifically, on the verbal formulation of oracular wisdom, but not on oracular wisdom itself.

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[54] So according to Burnet (1930, p. 132). It should be added however that this type of expression characterises several fragments of Heraclitus and that it is a prominent feature of his language. Aeschylus and Pindar on the other hand employ ambiguity admittedly less frequently in their works.

[55] Cf. Guthrie (1965, p. 487), and Cornford (1957, p. 187). Cornford argues that Heraclitus understood the visible world as a myth, i.e. a tale which is half true and half false, and which embodies a *λόγος*, i.e. a basic truth according to which all is one. In Cornford's view, this stands for a sign of mysticism in Heraclitus' cosmology.

[56] Cf. Freeman (1953, p. 106; p. 121).

Some scholars have objected, however, to the understanding of Heraclitus' authority claims in connection with the status of the prophet. Kahn argues that the negative stand which Heraclitus takes on madness in fragments B5 and B15 makes it hard to accept that he would have also considered himself one of these individuals.[57] In a similar vein, P. Wheelwright has pointed out that Heraclitus does not share the same method with the prophets, since he did not participate in the divine, when he acquired his insight into the true nature of the world.[58] Granger, moreover, has observed that the ability to understand the cosmic *λόγος* is common for all men in Heraclitus as opposed to the secluded knowledge of the mystical cults.[59]

There are however more serious reasons why it is impossible to mistake Heraclitus for a prophet. To begin with, the form of expression which Heraclitus uses in his fragments suggests a rather different intention in his self-projection. The characteristic brevity of his statements makes his message more impressive and potentially easier to memorise, in the same way in which proverbs encompass and circulate popular wisdom. This style is efficient and functional for the oral communication of ideas, and it is partly for this reason that Heraclitus uses it for the publication of his cosmology. There is however one further important function of brevity, which can provide us with a better understanding of Heraclitus' authority claims. This form of expression multiplies the possible interpretations of a single phrase, exactly because it is not a particularly detailed mode of exposition. This style can thus generate a certain polysemy, since several distinct meanings can be

[57] Cf. Kahn (1979, p. 126 *ad* B92). It should be pointed out however that ecstatic manticism was not the only case of ancient divination. The seers were rather specialised experts on the divine and they had a quite sophisticated art at their disposal. See also in the introduction.
[58] Cf. Wheelwright (1959, p. 24).
[59] Cf. Granger (1974, p. 258). He rightly bases his case on fragment B116, in which Heraclitus credits everyone with the ability to be wise (*σωφρονεῖν*).

implied by a single phrase. It also brings about a higher level of multivocity and signification.

The immediate result of this is that language functions on two levels. On a first level a phrase refers to what is immediately understood, and as such it involves the immediate reaction of the audience to whatever it is that is stated. On a second, and more crucial, level however a different meaning is deliberately *implied* by the same phrase. In order to realise the second and intentionally concealed message the audience has to use their critical ability, since this message is not presented in an explicit, and therefore immediately graspable, manner. They have to look in other words behind the surface meaning. In so doing they also have to *interpret* the phrase from a different standpoint.

iv) the authoritative act of *σημαίνειν* : *σημαίνεσθαι*

We have seen that in fragments B93 and B32 Heraclitus implies the expression which he chose for the publication of his cosmology. In fragment B93 in particular he uses the verb *σημαίνει* to describe the way in which oracular wisdom was communicated to each individual inquirer. This verb is of a particular importance for understanding Heraclitus' authority claims, and it can help us throw some light on the way in which Heraclitus perceived and defined his personal authority.

The verb *σημαίνειν* frequently occurs in connection with the disclosure of a truth, and as such it was not used exclusively for the description of oracular style. In Homer *σημαίνειν* appears mainly with the sense of "to issue a command", i.e. "to reveal the right course of action".[60] It could also acquire

[60] Cf. e.g., A 289, A 295-6, B 205, Λ 789, Σ 250; Eur. *Hel*. 1256; and Hdt. *Hist*. 1.116. It is also worthy of note that the Homeric word for commander is *σημάντωρ*, something which implies that the giving of orders required a certain skill. Cf. Δ 431, Θ 127, σ 21;

the sense of "omen", in which case it refers to an *observable* sign by which a god reveals his will to mankind.[61] In addition, it is used twice of a characteristic quality of an object which distinguishes it from every other and due to which this object acquires its unique value.[62] From the last two senses the verb acquired a metaphorical meaning, and it could also stand for "an indication of something", whereby the true nature of the latter is revealed to the perception of men.[63] *Σημαίνειν* is also attested with other minor meanings, such as that of "tomb",[64] of "outstanding",[65] of "evidence",[66] and of "noticeable".[67]

Hymn. hom. Dem. 376, Ap. 542; and Herm. 367; Hes. *Sc*. 56; fr. 5.3; fr. 195.56; and Hdt. *Hist*. 7.81.

[61] Cf. B 203, Δ 381, Θ 170, I 236-7, N 244, χ 413; Hes. *Sc*. 385, fr. 141.25; and Aesch. *Choeph*. 259.

[62] Cf. H 189: *γνῶ δὲ κλήρου σῆμα ἰδὼν*. In this case, Aias is the only one who can recognise his personal mark on the lot that the herald drew. Cf. also, the *σήματα* of the connubial bed which Odysseus intimates to Penelope, and which no one else knows at ψ 225-6. Of course, episode of the identification of Odysseus is based on the scar on his leg, which he acquired when hunting a boar on Parnassus with the sons of Autolycus. Again, this *σῆμα* is convincing, because it is a unique sign which only Odysseus has. It is this scar that Odysseus shows to his devoted Eumaeus and Philoetius at φ 217 (*σῆμα ἀριφραδὲς ἄλλο τι δείξω*), and to his father Laertes, when he asks Odysseus for credentials of his identity at ω 329 (*σῆμα τί μοι νῦν εἰπὲ ἀριφραδές, ὄφρα πεποίθω*). And Eyrucleia intimates to Penelope that she saw this scar when washing Odysseus' feet at ψ 73 (*σῆμα ἀριφραδὲς ἄλλο τι εἶπω*). The unquestionable value of this mark is underlined by the epithet *ἀριφραδές*, i.e. very manifest and, consequently, convincing. Cf. also, Ψ 326 and λ 126 (*σῆμα δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδές, οὐδέ σε λήσει*). In these cases *σῆμα* is used of a special characteristic of an item, which is known only to the person who can identify it, either because he was the one who made it, or because he is the only one who has access to it, or because he is the one who knows about the way it was produced. Cf. also, the word *σηματουργὸς* for the craftsman who manufactures the decoration of a shield, Aesch. *Sept. Th.* 491. Again, this carved embellishment is a unique design.

[63] Cf. Arch. fr. 105.3W: *σῆμα χειμῶνος*; and Sol. fr. 27.4W: *ἥβης δὲ φάνει σήματα γενομένης*. In these examples the signs of winter and youth actually imply what they really are. Cf. also, *Hymn. hom.* Dion. 46.

[64] Cf. Λ 166; Simon. *Epigr*. 7.509, 7.511; and Hdt. *Hist.* 1.93. Cf. also H 89, according to which Hector's armour will become a *σῆμα*, i.e. a visual reminder, of his heroic death in the battlefield. It is also worthy of note that the tomb by being a *σῆμα* also means to evoke to the mind of its spectator the excellence of the brave warrior and to in this way set an example for morality. This particular sense of *σῆμα* is more overtly

In regard to the way in which Heraclitus employs *σημαίνειν* in fragment B93, *σημαίνω* and cognates may be used of knowledge.[68] In this case it refers either to the act of bringing a matter or truth to the knowledge of someone,[69] or to the act of simply disclosing this knowledge.[70] The person who reveals the truth, furthermore, is believed to have the authority for this, and the reliability of his truth is never questioned. It therefore seems that *σημαίνειν* could also indicate the revelation of knowledge from a standpoint of authority.

It therefore becomes apparent that *σημαίνειν* taken alone does not generally imply the authority of the prophet. In fact, it occurs rarely in explicit connection with the prediction of the future, in which case the compound form *προσημαίνω* is employed.[71] It then seems that *σημαίνειν* was more frequently used in order to refer to the process with which one obtains

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manifested in Aesch. *Pers.* 818-20. In this case the mass of dead bodies teaches that one should not exceed the limits of what is proper on moral grounds.

[65] Cf. *Hymn. hom.* Merc. 12: *ἀρίσημά τε ἔργα τέτυκτο*.

[66] Aeschylus uses it in this sense in *Ag.* 606. In this case *σημαντήριον* refers to evidence, which is not produced nonetheless from reasoned thinking but which results from observable experience. It is also worthy of note that Parmenides uses *σήματα* in B8.2 in the sense of "reasoned evidence".

[67] In the Homeric hymn to Luna, for example, the shine of Selene is described as *τέκμωρ δὲ βροτοῖς καὶ σῆμα*, i.e. as something which reveals her existence to men (line 13). Hesiod, furthermore, says that the voice of the crane is *ἀρότοιο σῆμα*, i.e. it indicates that it is the right time for the ploughing of the fields (*Op*. 448). In both cases, *σῆμα* is used in order to denote something which is brought to the attention of men.

[68] Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 522: *οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον οἶδ'/ ἄσημα γὰρ λέγεις* (i.e. what you have just said, does not add anything new to my knowledge).

[69] Cf. Aesch. *Suppl*. 245; Eur. *Hec*. 512, and 499; *Elect*. 765; *Iph. Taur*. 1209; *Ion*, 945; Thuc. *Hist*. 6.20; and Hdt. *Hist*. 1.75. Or, in the sense "to bring to the surface": Eur. *Androm*. 264-5: *ἀλλὰ γὰρ λόγους κρύψω, τὸ δ' ἔργον αὐτὸ σημανεῖ*.

[70] Cf. Aesch. *Prom. Vinct*. 295, and 683-5; Eur. *Androm*. 1084, and 1238; *Phoen*. 1076; *Heracl*. 799; Soph. *OC* 51; *Tr*. 345; *Ant*. 242; Hdt. *Hist*. 1.209, 6.39; and 7.213.

[71] Cf. Eur. *Suppl.* 212-3: *ἐς πῦρ βλέποντες καὶ κατὰ σπλάχνων πτυχὰς μάντεις προσημαίνουσιν οἰωνῶν τ' ἀπό*. It is also used in this sense by Odysseus, when he tells to Penelope the *σῆμα ἀριφραδὲς* which Teiresias revealed to him, and which will mark in due time the end of his wandering (ψ 273).

knowledge. It was also used in order to describe the very process of disclosing knowledge to someone. This in turn speaks volumes about the nature of Heraclitus' authority claims, since it suggests to us the way in which Heraclitus understood his interaction with his audience, which we can now interpret in new light.

Heraclitus appears to be aware that he never fully discloses his cosmological knowledge to his audience. He simply provides them with some indications. These will in his view inevitably lead them to the same cosmological conclusions which he has reached provided of course that they think right. He thus tries to trigger their ability to think in a reasonable manner and at the same time to enhance their ability to think wisely. This is also reflected in Heraclitus' belief in that one can potentially improve his ability to understand and to be wise, as the following set of fragments shows:

> B79: ἀνὴρ νήπιος ἤκουσε πρὸς δαίμονος ὅκωσπερ παῖς πρὸς ἀνδρός
> B83: ἀνθρώπων ὁ σοφώτατος πρὸς θεὸν πίθηκος φανεῖται καὶ σοφίᾳ καὶ κάλλει καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσιν
> B115: ψυχῆς ἐστι λόγος ἑαυτὸν αὔξων

However, Heraclitus thought that it is only through him that the audience can learn how to become wise and to obtain knowledge, as he clearly states in fragment B1. This also becomes apparent from that Heraclitus several times in his fragments repeats his personal conviction that he reveals to his audience the particular features of the cosmic *λόγος*. It then seems that Heraclitus adopts a didactic posture in his presentation, since he guides his audience towards a new knowledge. In so doing he is applying a mode of self-presentation, which was previously used by Hesiod in his *Opera et Dies*.

It is worthy of note however, that there are two significant differences between Hesiod's and Heraclitus' didactic perspectives. To begin with, Heraclitus evidently intends to enhance the ability of his audience to think

and to use their *νοός* appropriately. This is also suggested by that for Heraclitus it is crucial that one not only listens carefully to him but also that can *understand* his message.[72] He also sets the issue of acquiring insight into the true nature of the cosmos as the default topic of the knowledge which he discloses.[73] These two elements are notably absent from Hesiod's teaching. Hesiod does not present a similarly theoretical knowledge and it is perhaps for this reason that he does not consider personal intelligence as crucial for the successful delivery of his message. The knowledge which he presents is of a more practical nature, since it pertains mostly to agricultural life and work. In such a case, personal judgement is not, of course, considered a necessary condition, and all Hesiod demands from Perses in his didactic epos is his careful attention, but he never asks him to reflect upon the advice which he gives him.

Heraclitus' attack against other individuals shows that he distinguished the authoritative status of the teacher. In fragment B57 he criticises Hesiod, whom he describes as a *διδάσκαλος*, for failing to realise that day and night are identical. The mention of Hesiod in specific as an example of a *διδάσκαλος* in this fragment suggests that Heraclitus recognised a type of instructing authority. It is also significant that in fragment B57 Heraclitus openly contrasts his personal truth, namely that all is one, to that presented by Hesiod. This in turn implies that he wants to claim for himself

[72] That Heraclitus appeals with his account to the personal wit of his audience is also suggested by that he characterises *ἀξύνετοι* those who fail to perceive the truth of his *λόγος*. Cf. frs. B1 and B34. In fragment B15, furthermore, he uses the verb *ξυνιᾶσιν* in connection with the principle of *ἁρμονίη*, which shows that what Heraclitus wants from his audience is that they understand the truth which he discloses. For an examination of the occurrence of γνω- words in Heraclitus in connection with his attempt to establish an epistemological vocabulary, see Lesher (1983). See also Table I and VII in the Appendix.

[73] Cf. B1: *γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε*; but also B40 and B72. In these fragments Heraclitus refers explicitly to his attempt to discover the pattern according to which everything in the cosmos is structured.

from Hesiod the authority of the *διδάσκαλος*. Heraclitus refers to the status of the *διδάσκαλος* again in fragment B104:

> Τίς γὰρ αὐτῶν νόος ἢ φρήν; Δήμων ἀοιδοῖσι πείθονται καὶ διδασκάλῳ χρείωνται ὁμίλῳ οὐκ εἰδότες ὅτι πολλοὶ κακοί, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἀγαθοί

The polemical tone of this fragment is suggested by the contrast between the "many-ness" of *ὁμίλῳ* and *πολλοί* with the wise *λίγοι* and *ἕν*.[74] The mention of *νόος* and *φρήν*, furthermore, implies that for Heraclitus a substantial authority claim should be accompanied by intelligence and critical reflection. Heraclitus attacks Homer in a similar vein in fragment B56, in which he mocks his inability to solve a riddle presented to him by children. What Homer lacks according to Heraclitus is intelligence, and it is for this reason that he cannot be considered *σοφώτατος πάντων*. [75] Heraclitus then faults Homer for not being able to *understand*, like him, the cosmic riddle.[76]

These fragments show that *διδάσκαλος* is for Heraclitus a distinct status of authority, which he wants to claim for himself. For this reason he openly criticises Hesiod and Homer and, more importantly, the knowledge which they presented and with which they managed to obtain social recognition. Yet Heraclitus gives the status of the *διδάσκαλος* a new twist, since he orients his knowledge, on grounds of which he makes a claim to authority, to a reasoned investigation of the structure of the cosmos.

5. The *λόγος κοινός* of Heraclitus

[74] See also the examination of fragment B40 above.

[75] The point which Heraclitus makes here is further underlined by that the children obviously represent a naive stage of understanding. Heraclitus uses children several times in order to imply a second-rate way of knowing. Cf. B70, B74, B79, but also B117.

[76] Heraclitus attacks again Homer in B42, in which he claims that he and Archilochus should be dismissed from the poetic contests.

We have already noted that Heraclitus furnished his message with extra difficulty and perplexity. It has been suggested that Heraclitus wished in this way to deny access to his knowledge to those whom he regarded incapable of understanding his cosmology.[77] It is certainly true that in the extant fragments Heraclitus frequently stresses the difficulty which one encounters when he tries to grasp his *λόγος*. It is not exactly true, however, that he also desired to exclude some members of his audience from the cosmic knowledge which he discloses.

In fragments B2 and B113 he states that the *λόγος*, understood here as mental apprehension, is common (*ξυνός*) to all men. It then seems only natural to accept that for Heraclitus everyone is credited with the ability to perceive the truthfulness of his account. The epithet *ξυνός* occurs regularly in crucial points of Heraclitus' fragments:

> B2: <διὸ δεῖ ἕπεσθαι> τῶι ξυνῶι. τοῦ λόγου δ' ἐόντος ξυνοῦ ζώουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ὡς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν
> B113: ξυνόν ἐστι πᾶσι τὸ φρονέειν
> B114: ξὺν νόωι λέγοντας ἰσχυρίζεσθαι χρὴ τῶι ξυνῶι πάντων
> B80: εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν
> B103: ξυνὸν γὰρ ἀρχὴ καὶ πέρας ἐπὶ κύκλου περιφερείας

Heraclitus used a pun in order to express the complex notion that wise thinking (*ξυν-νοός*) is common (*κοινός*) to everyone, as suggested by fragments B2 and B113.[78] According to Heraclitus, furthermore, the condition of wise thinking necessarily implies the acceptance of the principle that "all is one", i.e. *κοινά* (B114). This becomes apparent also from fragment B80, in which Heraclitus explicitly associates *ξυνός* with the cosmic process, which

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[77] So according to Diogenes, who thought that Heraclitus *ἐπιτηδεύσας ἀσαφέστερον γράψαι, ὅπως οἱ δυνάμενοι <μόνοι> προσίοιεν αὐτῶι* (*Vit.*, 1.31).

[78] Homer also uses *ξύνεσις* once in order to refer to the junction point of two smaller rivers (Cf. κ 515: *ξύνεσίς τε δύω ποταμῶν*). Heraclitus is perhaps using this metaphorically so as to imply his personal skill of combining intelligently into a single scheme the visual manifestations of the *λόγος*. For the use of *ξυνίημι* in other works, see e.g. *α* 271, Z 289, τ 378; but also, Theogn. 2. 1239-40.

he terms *πόλεμος*. In fragment B103 Heraclitus exploits this word-play on *ξυνός* in order to illustrate his basic tenet that opposite concepts are one. This is an impressive fragment, because it claims that one can easily observe for his own account in the geometrical shape of the circle that it is impossible to distinguish its beginning from its end. This in turn leads to the inevitable conclusion that these two opposite concepts, namely the beginning and the end, are identical.

The adjective *κοινός* is from every aspect an ordinary word. What is special about the way in which Heraclitus uses it, however, is that he associates it with human intelligence. This is an important element in Heraclitus' epistemology, because it shows that he credited men with the ability to know based on their own innate capacity to perceive and to understand. It immediately becomes apparent that this idea is head-on attack on the epic belief that charismatic individuals, and through them mankind in general, can obtain knowledge only from the gods. In addition, Heraclitus uses the metaphor of waking and sleeping life in order to denote the contrast between wisdom (i.e. conscious reflection) and ignorance (i.e. an "unconscious" or random way of experiencing cosmic reality).[79]

And yet although men have the natural means to understand the cosmos, the interpretation of perceptible reality is what always escapes their attention. In his fragments he frequently criticises men for failing to grasp the truthfulness of his message:

> B1: ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον
> B2: τοῦ λόγου δ' ἐόντος ξυνοῦ ζώουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ὡς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν
> B17: οὐ γὰρ φρονέουσι τοιαῦτα πολλοί, ὁκόσοι ἐγκυρεῦσιν, οὐδὲ μαθόντες γινώσκουσιν, ἑωυτοῖσι δὲ δοκέουσι

[79] Cf. also B1 and B73. On the contrast between the cosmos which men experience in everyday life and the deceiving one of their dreams, see Vlastos (1955), and Marcovich (1967, *ad* B30).

B19: ἀκοῦσαι οὐκ ἐπιστάμενοι οὐδ' εἰπεῖν
B34: ἀξύνετοι ἀκούσαντες κωφοῖσιν ἐοίκασι
B86: ἀπιστίηι διαφυγγάνει μὴ γιγνώσκεσθαι
B87: βλὰξ ἄνθρωπος ἐπὶ παντὶ λόγωι ἑπτοῆσθαι φιλεῖ
B95: ἀμαθίην γὰρ ἄμεινον κρύπτειν
B97: κύνες γὰρ καταβαϋζουσιν ὧν ἂν μὴ γινώσκωσι

In these fragments Heraclitus links the failure of men to apply *ξύνεσις* with the unwillingness of some to listen to him carefully, and also with that they insist on living according to their personal standards thus showing disregard for the hidden principle which controls everything and which Heraclitus discloses to them. He was also rather disappointed by the way in which men tend to react when they encounter new and wholly unfamiliar ideas. For him indifference towards knowledge is equally unintelligent to not knowing at all. At any event, Heraclitus criticised men for their shortcoming in delivering themselves from the state of ignorance, but he never altogether questioned their ability to know.

Heraclitus' claim that his account appeals to the *νόος* of his audience speaks volumes about the way in which he perceived his personal expertise.[80] It shows that he obviously understood the investigation of the cosmos as the undertaking of an intellectual task. All the same, he did not consider the interpretation of the cosmos an easy task. This is chiefly manifested in his belief that *φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* (B123), which Reihnhardt interpreted as an "erkenntnis theoretischer Satz".[81] This element of difficulty stresses the importance and superiority of Heraclitus' expertise.

[80] For an excellent examination of the early uses of *νόος*, see von Fritz (1945). Marcovich understood *νόος* of B40 as "intelligence", which Kirk translated as "insight". Cf. (1967, *ad* B40) and (1954, *ad* B40) respectively. In a similar fashion, Jaeger held that *νόος* signifies in Heraclitus a quality which is equivalent to *σοφόν* and *σοφίη* (1967, p. 125).
[81] Cf. Reinhardt (1916, p. 88).

6. Heraclitus' expertise: his *σοφίη*

It appears that Heraclitus distinguished *σοφίη* as a solid basis which could reliably support authority claims. He in fact refers to *σοφίη* several times in the extant fragments:

> B32: ἕν τὸ σοφὸν μοῦνον λέγεσθαι οὐκ ἐθέλει καὶ ἐθέλει Ζηνὸς ὄνομα
> B41: ἕν τὸ σοφὸν ἐπίστασθαι γνώμην, ὁτέη ἐκυβέρνησε πάντα διὰ πάντων
> B50: ...ὁμολογεῖν σοφόν ἐστιν ἕν πάντα εἶναι
> B108: ...σοφόν ἐστι πάντων κεχωρισμένον
> B112: ...σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαϊοντας

Fragments B41 and B112 in particular are especially important, because they provide evidence that Heraclitus associated *σοφίη* with the interpretation and understanding of cosmic reality. Interestingly enough, Heraclitus never openly proclaims that he is a *σοφός*. If we view however fragments B41 and B112 in light of fragment B1 and in connection with the general content of Heraclitus' fragments, it seems that he obviously considered himself worthy of such a status. In addition, his confidence for his personal *σοφίη* is implied by his belief that there is only *one* way of being wise, which for him is of course the knowledge of the wise *ἕν*, the principle which rules everything in the physical world.[82] This set of fragments, furthermore, shows that Heraclitus was deeply concerned with the *capability* of men to pursue knowledge and to extend the capacity of their *ἴδιος νοῦς*, as C. Osborne put it.[83] It then seems that Heraclitus, like Xenophanes, affirms the possibility of *human* knowledge, although he admittedly does so more emphatically and relatively more systematically than Xenophanes, for whom human knowledge is a *δόκος*.

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[82] See also Table VI in the Appendix for an overview of the uses of *σοφίη* in the cosmologists under examination.
[83] Cf. Osborne (1987, p. 182).

It is perhaps possible to trace here a slight shift in the way in which individuals responded to the question of obtaining knowledge which is of a higher status, on grounds of which they sought to establish their authority claims. In epic poetry knowledge was viewed by the individuals who desired to lay a claim to a status of authority as a transcendental insight which they acquired from their divine patrons, who supervised them in their attempt to discover the truth. It should be pointed out however that this belief applies only to the case of charismatic individuals and it does not refer to a commonly held view in ancient Greek society about human epistemology.

Human knowledge was firstly made a human affair by Xenophanes, who apparently questioned the validity of the knowledge, which derives from the gods (B18). Heraclitus on the other hand seems to push Xenophanes' assumption one step further. For him the possibility of knowledge was felt as the product of a natural aptitude of mankind which, when oriented and applied correctly, could result in fruitful conclusions and bring about a better way of understanding. And for him better understanding is the essential characteristic of the authoritative status of every *σοφός* like himself.

Remember the light
and believe the light.
Sarah Kane, 4.48

Chapter IV: Parmenides

Parmenides differs in many ways from Heraclitus, not only because he expressed his cosmology in verse, but also because of the rather distinct quality of his more abstract doctrine. At the outset of his poem, Parmenides introduces his cosmology to the audience as the product of divine revelation. He then proceeds to establish a proper method of inquiry, on the appropriate basis of which knowledge should be pursued. In addition, Parmenides distinguishes more systematically *ἀληθείη* from *δόξα*, which constitute the two major parts of his exposition. The notable feature of Parmenides' thought is that in the purely cosmological-ontological part of his poem he reconstructs the unapparent reality of the *ἐόν*. This reality is not a figment of imagination but the product of the power of human mental apprehension, which is applied according to the method which Parmenides has earlier established. The immediate implication of these elements is that the authority claims of Parmenides range from that of the religious teacher or the poet to that of a more soberly systematic discussion of the cosmos.

1. Parmenides as a poet: his proem and the goddess

In the opening lines of his poem Parmenides openly claims divine inspiration for what he has to say. He begins his otherwise cosmological-ontological exposition by describing an epic journey to a goddess who remains a shady figure throughout the poem, yet is the one who reveals the truth which follows. In the proem, Parmenides applies two *leitmotifs*: the

journey and the encounter with a divine person who promises to disclose knowledge to the traveller.

If we wish to interpret the precise function of the proem in connection with Parmenides' authority claims, it is crucial that we examine firstly the question of whether Parmenides is sincere when he applies such a style to this thought or whether he is, as Bowra put it, "plainly allegorizing".[1] It is important to understand, that is to say, whether the proem should be read literally or as an imaginative recreation of traditional material of poetry which suggests rather at something else.

The allegorical reading of the proem was not unknown to the ancient commentators. Sextus was the first who submitted a detailed examination of the allegorical features in Parmenides' proem. Sextus identified *ἵπποι* with the irrational impulses and desires of the soul, *ὁδός* with *θεωρία*, which eventually leads to the knowledge of everything, *κοῦραι* with the senses (sight is in his view implied by *Ἡλιάδες* and hearing by *δοιοῖς κύκλοις*), and the keys which *Δίκη* holds with the *ἀσφαλεῖς τῶν πραγμάτων καταλήψεις* through the power of the mind.[2] It is, of course, impossible to lend our full support to this view, since it seems hard to accept that Parmenides would

[1] Cf. Bowra (1937, p. 98) and, more recently, Coxon (1986, p. 15) and Curd (2004, p. 19). In a somewhat similar spirit Burnet interpreted the proem as an allegory for Parmenides' conversion to Pythagoreanism (1930, p. 170). See also, Diels (2003, p. 9 ff.). Henn, moreover, understood the proem as an allegory for the experience of the shaman (2003, p. 51). These suggestions are not safe, for reasons discussed in the following section. According to Farandos the "mythologische Bildsprache" of the proem conveys the concepts of "philosophische Zetetik und Heuristik" (1982, p. 69), while for Freeman the allegory of the proem actually states Parmenides' new method (1966, p. 146). Tarán on the other hand points out that the content of the proem cannot be taken as real, since it uses tenses which imply the narration of a *repeated* experience rather than of a past event (1965, p. 30). Furley, followed by Gallop, interpreted the proem as a *katabasis* myth like the one in *Odyssey's Νέκυια* (cf. 1975, p. 2 and 1984, p. 7, respectively). For other scholarly views which support the allegorical reading of the proem, see Barnes (1982, p. 156), Reinhardt (1916, p. 67; and 1974, p. 301), and Guthrie (1965, pp. 4 and10), but also Havelock (1958, pp. 133-143), and Deichgraeber (1959, pp. 6-11; 23-43; and 85-6).

[2] Cf. *adv. math.* VII.111 ff.

have assumed these pictures he uses in his proem as literary representations of other concepts. It seems safe to accept that in the proem Parmenides employs mythological language. However, there is no compelling reason to assume, together with Sextus, such a strict correspondence between every metaphor with an implied meaning. At the same time, however, it is possible to trace some element of truth in such an interpretation.

E. Havelock pointed out that Parmenides intends to evoke in the opening lines of his poem the epic figure of Odysseus.[3] This is manifested in Parmenides' use of the *ὁδός* motif, which persists throughout the poem, and of the imagery of travelling. It is crucial to add here that the image of travelling alludes not only to the well-known story about Odysseus' wandering, but also to his status as an unsurpassed example of human wisdom.[4] In the opening of the *Odyssey*, that is, Odysseus' wisdom is justified on grounds of the experience he has acquired in his travels. This experience is defined, furthermore, as the opportunity to become acquainted with the mentality of many different peoples. In a similar vein, Parmenides claims that the route which he follows *κατὰ πάντ' ἄστη φέρει εἰδότα φῶτα* (line 3). This phrase bears an obvious resonance to the Homeric line according to which Odysseus *πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα*.[5] In addition, we learn from the *Odyssey* that Odysseus experienced his adventures *κατὰ θυμόν*. This in turn naturally brings to mind Parmenides' mention of his *θυμός* in the very first

[3] Cf. Havelock (1958).

[4] For an extensive study on the similarities between Odysseus and Parmenides, see Havelock (1958) but also Manfelf (1964, pp. 229-30). Havelock concludes in his examination that Parmenides presents himself in the opening of his poem as a new type of hero. However, as Mansfeld observes in his analysis, Parmenides does not wish to fully identify himself with Odysseus but to contrast himself with him. For the same suggestion, see also Mourelatos (2008, p. 39) and Cosgrove (1974, p. 92).

[5] There has been some controversy however pertinent to Parmenides' use of *εἰδότα φῶτα*, for which see analysis below.

line of his poem.[6] It then becomes apparent that Parmenides is trying to appropriate the mythical example of Odysseus, who is regarded a case of superior knowledge, to his personal authority claims.

However, the crucial difference is that Parmenides is an individual who directly address an audience with *his* verses. This is partly suggested also by the fact that he is also rather outspoken about himself in the proem.[7] This implies that Parmenides believes that he has his own story to tell, which he implicitly differentiates from the myth about Odysseus. In what follows the verses of Parmenides run swiftly and immediately this brief association of himself with Odysseus retreats, since, unlike Odysseus, Parmenides claims that he travelled to a place which is unknown to other mortals.[8] Like

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[6] It is true that *θυμὸς* was for the Greeks the seat of emotions. However, this should not be taken as evidence for that Parmenides' doctrine combines intuitive and reflective knowledge, as according to Fränkel (1975, p. 365) and Sellmer (1998, p. 200). At any event the method which Parmenides goes on to establish in B2 relies on critical reflection rather than on intuition. In addition, Fränkel identifies *θυμός* with Parmenides' "metaphysical spirit". However, metaphysics *is* for Parmenides a matter of rationality. At any event, it is not beyond doubt that the first instance of philosophical activity would have perceived from the outset of its appearance such a sharp distinction between different ways of knowing.

[7] Fränkel observed the frequent use of the authoritative-I in the proem (1975, p. 365). Coxon suggested that the *μέ* of the first line calls for an immediate clarification, from which he concludes that Parmenides' work was introduced with the phrase *Παρμενίδης Πύρητος Ἐλεάτης ὧδε μυθεῖται* (1986, p. 156). This view neglects that at the event of the oral presentation of Parmenides' poem such a clarification would in fact be superfluous. In addition, it does not seem safe to add a prose opening to a work composed in verse. As noted already, the use of the authoritative-I in the proem should be taken to imply the description of an actual experience. It functions as an allegory for the way in which Parmenides managed to reach his cosmological insights.

[8] Cf. B1.27: *ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἐκτὸς πάτου*. Parmenides makes it explicit that the revelation of the goddess takes place in her realm, as *δῶ* in B1.25 further suggests. Bowra rightly points out that the claim which Parmenides makes here is not a common one in traditional poetry. In his view, Parmenides was the only "poet" who presented himself as someone better than every other man (1937, p. 105). Curd on the other hand interpreted this phrase as evidence for that Parmenides distanced himself from the world of ordinary human life (2004, p. 21). To be more precise, however, the

Odysseus, however, Parmenides is, too, on friendly terms with the divine. In fact, it is exactly for this reason that his journey is accomplished. Not only do the *Ἡλιάδες κοῦραι* guide his chariot (lines 8-9),[9] but they also put in a word on his behalf, when he encounters the goddess (*πεῖσαν ἐπιφραδέως*, line 15). The goddess then receives Parmenides warmly (*πρόφρων*, line 22)[10] and promises to reveal to him the truth (*Ἀληθείης ἀτρεμὲς ἦτορ*, line 29) as well as the opinions of mortals (*βροτῶν δόξας*, line 30).

It is important to note, however, that although Parmenides is obviously aided in his travel to the realm of the goddess by these divine personages he is nonetheless never treated as their equal, and he never dispels his status as a mortal.[11] At the same time, however, it is only plain to see that Parmenides considers himself better than the average mortal, since he is the *exclusive* recipient of divine grace.

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unordinary route which Parmenides follows is a metaphorical description of his distancing from the world of sensual experience. See also, Prier (1976, p. 103).

[9] For the traditional *topos* of a mortal being guided by a divinity, the formula for which is *ὁδὸν ἡγεμονεύειν*, cf. ζ 259-61 (Nausica), η 30 (Athena), κ 501 (Circe), but also ω 225, *Hymn. hom.* In Merc. 302-3, and Hes. *Th.* 387. For the parallel of a god travelling on a chariot, cf. Saph. fr. 1.9 (Aphrodite); Alc. fr. 1-4 (Apollo); *Hymn. hom.* Dem. 431-2; but also Emped. B4.5 (Calliope); Pl. *Phdr.* 246e (Zeus' *πτηνὸν ἅρμα*); and Pind. *Isth.* 8.61 (*Μοισαῖον ἅρμα*), and *Pyth.* 10.65 (*ἅρμα Πιερίδων*). The closest parallel to Parmenides' opening is Pind. *Ol*. 6.22-42. Pindar also mentions a *κελεύθῳ καθαρᾷ* and the *πύλας ὕμνων*, while he also claims that the Muses *ὁδὸν ἡγεμονεῦσαι*. However, the similarities between these parallels are limited to verbal echoes and they do not concern the general conceptual scheme of these two poems. For a discussion of these passages, see Wright (1997, p. 8 ff.) and Bowra (1937, p. 99).

[10] The traditional adjective *πρόφρων* actually means not simply "gladly" but also "well-disposed" and it is regularly applied to the way in which gods receive mortals. Cf. Θ 8.175; I 9. 480; K 242; Ψ 647; β 387; ξ 54; *Hom. hymn.* Dem. 226; *H* 31.17; Hes. *Op.* 666; Sapph. *Epigr.* 6.269; Pind. *Pyth.* 9.55-6; *Nem.* 5.23-4; Eurip. *Alc.* 742-4; and Aesch. *Suppl.* 216. It is also appears frequently in connection with the eagerness with which a god assists a mortal in accomplishing his goal. Cf. *Hymn. hom.* H 307; Hes. *Th.* 418-2; Pind. *Pyth.* 5.117-8; Aesch. *Ch.* 1063-4; and Sophocl. *El.* 1379-81.

[11] For the view that the human is never assimilated to the divine in Parmenides' poem, see analysis below.

When Parmenides finally meets the goddess he is in an obviously privileged position. The goddess' friendliness towards Parmenides is indicated by the fact that she addresses him as *κοῦρος* and *ἀθανάτοισιν συνάορος* (line 24), but also by the handshake which she exchanges with him (line 21).[12] The importance which Parmenides' journey has in connection with his authority claims is hinted at in the following two questions which arise from this scene: (a) why is the goddess well-disposed towards him, and (b) what is the outcome of their encounter. Interestingly enough, the goddess openly declares the reasons why she chose to meet Parmenides in lines 26 and 28, in which she says that he managed to reach her realm not because of a *μοῖρα κακή*, but because of *θέμις τε δίκη*. Parmenides is certainly choosing his words here carefully, which in turn suggests the importance which this scene has in establishing a claim to status of authority.

It then seems that Parmenides attributed the reason why he was chosen by the goddess to both *θέμις* and *δίκη*, which appear to illustrate a context of necessity (*Ἀνάγκη*) based on what can be deemed as appropriate, rightful, and lawful.[13] These concepts apparently imply, when taken at their face value, that Parmenides viewed his theoretical activity as a moral imperative.[14] A closer look, however, reveals that they recur in the main part of the poem, and more specifically in the strongly logical context of fragment

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[12] For parallels of handshake as a gesture of *bona fides* (*πίστις*), cf. *α* 120 ff.; Soph. *Philoct.* 813; *OC*. 1632. See also Eur. *Med.* 21-2.

[13] For concept of *Δίκη* as a power of cosmic and social balance, cf. ξ 83-4; Hes. *Op.* 276 ff., and *Op.* 217; and, of course, Anax. B1, and Sol. fr. 4.14. For the representation of *Δίκη* as crooked (*σχολίη*), i.e. false, judgment, see Hes. *Op.* 219; 250; and 264. For *Ἀνάγκη* as a constraint of necessity, cf. Z 458; η 217; Aesch. *Pers.* 293-4; 104-5, and 515; Sim. fr. 37.1.29; and *Hymn. Orph.* 3.11. For *Θέμις* as *ὀρθόβουλος*, see Aesch. *Prom. vinct.* 18.

[14] This reading is encouraged in particular from line 28, in which the goddess says that *χρεὼ δέ σε πάντα πυθέσθαι*. This was firstly suggested by Bowra, who based on the obviously moral tone of *Δίκη* concluded that the search of truth was felt by Parmenides as an ethical activity (1937, p. 107).

B8, in which Parmenides expounds the core of his doctrine, namely the true properties of the *ἐόν*. This set of lines runs as follows:

> B8.32: οὕνεκεν οὐκ ἀτελεύτητον τὸ ἐὸν θὲμις εἶναι
> B8.14: [τοῦ εἵνεκεν] οὔτε ὄλλυσθαι ἀνῆκε Δίκη χαλάσασα πέδῃσιν
> B8.37: ἐπεὶ τό γε Μοῖρ' ἐπέδησεν οὖλον ἀκίνητόν τ' ἔμεναι
> B8.16: κέκριται δ' οὖν, ὥσπερ ἀνάγκη
> B8.30: κρατερὴ γὰρ Ἀνάγκη/ πείρατος ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἔχει

It immediately becomes apparent that the above phrases all contain words which denote a logical conclusion (e.g. *οὕνεκεν*, *ἐπεί*, *οὖν*, *γάρ*). In addition, these statements describe the fundamental properties of the *ἐόν*. Line 32 concludes upon the incompleteness of the *ἐόν*, line 14 opposes the belief about the generation of the destruction of the *ἐόν*, and as such it encapsulates a polemic argument, line 37 discusses the immovability of the *ἐόν*, while lines 16 and 30 declare the logical necessity which follows Parmenides' conclusions.

It seems then that the argumentative context in which these qualities of the *ἐόν* appear in B8 offers decisive information for the interpretation of their particular function in the proem in connection with the way in Parmenides represents himself to his audience. Looking backwards, this is to say, we can now understand the reason why the goddess bestows her divine grace on Parmenides: he is skilful in acknowledging with his *νόος* the logical necessity which cosmological speculation requires.[15] After all, *Δίκη* is held entirely responsible for granting Parmenides with the permission to access the realm of the goddess, since she is the one who holds in her hands the door keys (*κλῆδας*) to her realm.[16] From what follows in the main part of the poem, furthermore, it seems only natural to identify the figure of *Δίκη* with the

[15] For a thorough examination of the technique of "insight by hindsight", which the early cosmologists employed in their works, see Mansfeld (1995).
[16] Cf. B1.15.

logical necessity which, according to Parmenides, theoretical knowledge demands.[17]

If this interpretation is correct, then this also implies that the figures of *Θέμις* and *Δίκη* are meant to function as a personification, and that as such they lose in Parmenides their purely poetic colour.[18] The last lines of the proem in particular show that Parmenides devises a technique of oral presentation, which was previously employed by Xenophanes. He eventually subverts, that is, the poetic imagery he applies in the opening of his poem in favour of a somewhat more clear and straightforward exposition of his cosmological-ontological message. It seems that once Parmenides has captured the attention of his audience by using traditional language, he nonetheless drops it when he gets to his real theoretical task.[19]

It is also in light of this that the role of the goddess in the proem should be interpreted. Scholars generally agree that it is impossible to identify her

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[17] So according to Fränkel (1960, p. 165; and 1975, p. 355), who understands *Δίκη* as "die Richtigkeit der Konsequenz"; Cherubin (2001, p. 267; and 2005, pp. 16-19), who further adds that *Δίκη*, *Ἀνάγκη*, and *Μοῖρα* set the conditions for the inquiry, and Gigon (1968, p. 252). In a similar vein, Lloyd interpreted *Δίκη* as the ordered structure of the cosmos (1979, p. 33, n.113). See also Lloyd's very useful examination of forms of pre-platonic arguments, one of which is the notion of logical necessity (1966, p. 442). Lloyd is right in interpreting *Ἀνάγκη* as a metaphor for reasonable thinking, since it also appears in the strongly logical context of B8. That *Ἀνάγκη* generally conveys the idea of orderliness in nature was extensively examined by Cornford, who also viewed it in connection with the pre-philosophical background (1912, chh. 1 and 2).

[18] These divinities have been viewed as personifications by Tarán (1965, pp. 117-8), Engelhard (1996, p. 149), for whom they stand for "die Kraft der Überzeugung", and Mansfeld (1964, p. 197), who further adds that these divinities are "richtitige Philosophengötter". Against this view, cf. Nestle (ZN, p. 691) and, more recently, Blank (1982, pp. 172-3), who interpreted these divinities as Orphic elements. Blank also holds the view that in this way Parmenides asks his audience to have faith in his message.

[19] As pointed out by Bowra, who reasonably observes that once Parmenides passes through the gates of the goddess all associations with Phaethon's myth, as he suggested, are lost (1937, p. 98).

with any standard figure of Greek mythology.[20] This in turn suggests that Parmenides' claim to a divine revelation has little to do with the actual traditional motif of epic inspiration.[21] As Mourelatos' analysis has shown, Parmenides' goddess is a "polymorphous deity", a concept which does not in fact appear in epic poetry.[22] This also accounts for why Parmenides deliberately blurs her special features. This is so because he wants in this way to avoid any associations which the audience would possibly make had he used a conventional figure for his "divine" revelation.

In addition, one of the basic features of the agents of divine inspiration in the Greek epos is their omniscience.[23] This characteristic is notably absent from Parmenides' goddess. This somehow appears as unexpected, especially when considering her promise to discuss matters that are closely related to *Ἀληθείη*. In other words, Parmenides, oddly enough, never attributes her knowledge to her divine status. This in turn suggests that Parmenides is clearly working with the frame of epic tradition, from which he nonetheless wishes to differentiate the knowledge which he presents. He appropriates a familiar epic motif in order to stress the importance of his message. In the opening lines of his poem therefore her divine status is considered as a substantial guarantee for the truthfulness of her account. The same does not

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[20] For the deliberate anonymity of the goddess, cf. Bowra (1937, pp. 106-7); Furley (1973, p. 3); and Engelhard (1996, p. 26). Cornford identified the goddess with reason (1952, p. 120), Fränkel with truth (1975, p. 353), while Mansfeld and Farandos with *Δίκη* (1964, p. 270; and 1982, p. 74 respectively). Furley was perhaps right in objecting however, that the goddess cannot be identified with *Δίκη* because she is also mentioned in the third person at line 28 (*ibid.*, n.3). Tarán was the only one who maintained that the goddess is not real for Parmenides. In his view she is a literary device which emphasises the objectivity of Parmenides' method (1965, p. 230).

[21] For an analysis of which, see in introduction.

[22] Cf. Mourelatos (2008, pp. 26-9).

[23] Cf., for example, the second invocation in the *Iliad*, in which the poet addresses the Muses with these words: *ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε πάρεστέ τε ἴστέ τε πάντα* (B485). It is also important to note that the poet then goes on to say that there is no possible way for mortals to know other than through the knowledge which gods reveal to mortals. In Parmenides however "mortals", too, are credited with the ability to know.

apply, however, for the main part of the poem, in which Parmenides apparently pursues knowledge on grounds of a more reasonable understanding.

In addition, the content of the truth which Parmenides' goddess discloses is barely similar with the truth or information which the Muses normally disclose in epic poetry. The goddess tells him that he will learn everything (*πάντα πυθέσθαι*, line 28), which she then goes on to define as both *Ἀληθείης ἦτορ* (line 29) and the *βροτῶν δόξας* (line 30). Parmenides reaches with this declaration the main purpose of his exposition, which he identifies with the discussion of truth. This distinction between right opinion (or of *ὀρθὴ δόξα*, as Plato later put it)[24] and false opinion persists throughout the poem. In fact, it is the poem.

The closest and most obvious poetic parallel to this distinction is found in what the Muses tell Hesiod:

> ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα,
> ἴδμεν δ' εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι[25]

Parmenides understands, however, this distinction in connection not with the presentation of a truthful version of an older story, as Hesiod, but in connection with the rational understanding of cosmic reality. Hesiod, furthermore, never refers to the logical implications of such a distinction. He simply points out to the possibility of error as opposed to the real truth. If we view the declaration which the goddess makes in the opening lines in light of what follows in the main part of the poem, it becomes apparent that her distinction between *Ἀληθείη* and *βροτῶν δόξας* refers to what can *qualify* as truth and what should be dismissed as erroneous belief according to rational

[24] Cf. Pl. *Symp.* 201d. According to Plato true *δόξα* is the intermediate stage between *φρονήσις* and *ἀμάθια*.

[25] Cf. *Th.* 27-28. For a comparison of Parmenides with Hesiod, especially in terms of style, see Dolin (1962).

standards. This is largely manifested in fragment B2, in which the goddess defines the two possible routes of inquiry. The logically admissible conclusions, which one reaches if he follows the appropriate route of inquiry, are presented in fragment B8.

It then becomes apparent that Parmenides establishes from the outset an elenctic process, which he bases on *κρίσις* and on *νόος*, and which functions as a standard according to which the truth-value of a certain doctrine is decided. This impression is further reinforced by the fact that in the last lines of the proem Parmenides uses twice words which imply the dialectic method which he employs in fragment B8.[26] It is important to point out that this concept is uniquely Parmenidean and that it is the novel message which Parmenides introduces to his audience. It seems, furthermore, that Parmenides sought to establish a posture of authority for himself based on this distinction, since he presents this new message in his proem as the product of a communication with the divine.[27]

Our examination of the role of the goddess in the acquisition of knowledge suggests that she functions as a literary device. At the same time however, it is only plain to see that whilst she plays an important role in the proem in the revelation of truth, the content of the truth which she apparently discloses in the main part of the poem is particularly Parmenidean in its own

[26] Cf. *πίστις ἀληθής* and *δοκίμως* in lines 30 and 32 respectively. Heidel was the first to argue that the notion of *πίστις* was taken from forensic argumentation (1943, pp. 717-9). For the same suggestion, cf., Verdenius (1958, p. 49), and Vlastos (1946, p. 590, n. 60). Blank on the other hand made the interesting suggestion that *πίστις* has in Parmenides a religious sense (1982, p. 177). For *δοκίμως* as "probable" in the sense of "proven", cf. Wilamovitz (1899, p. 205), and Calogero (1931, pp. 31-2), but also Democr. B67.

[27] Cf., for instance, the claim made in B2.7: *κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῦθον ἀκούσας.*

right.[28] This realisation brings to the foreground the key question of to whom does the actual voice of authority which is used in the poem belong.

If we accept the possibility that the goddess is a literary conceit, then it seems only natural to also assume that the voice of authority used in the poem belongs to Parmenides himself.[29] This impression is further encouraged by the fact that in the main part of the poem the presence of the goddess gradually fades out. In fact, if we isolate the main part of Parmenides' exposition from the proem, there is little to remind us of the goddess' divine presence and involvement in the presentation of truth. It seems more reasonable to accept that in the proem the converse occurs between Parmenides and the goddess but in the main part of the poem it takes place between Parmenides and his audience. The shift in the owner of the voice of authority of the poem is also manifested in that the first part of the poem has a strongly narrative quality, which retreats in the main part, in which a more straightforwardly didactic posture is adopted. This is mainly manifested in the lines from the main part of the poem, which explicitly refer to the first or to the second person:

B2.1-2: εἰ δ' ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῦθον ἀκούσας
αἵπερ ὁδοὶ μοῦναι διζήσιός ἐστι νοῆσαι
B4.1: λεῦσσε δ' ὅμως ἀπέοντα νόῳ παρέοντα βεβαίως

[28] For an overview of the thing which gods normally grant to humans in poetry, see *Hymn. hom.* H 8.9; Hes. *Op.* 9; Theog. *El.* 1.4; *El.* 1.13; Aesch. *Ch.* 139-41; γ 55-6; but also, O 514 ff.; and Sapph. fr. 1. 21-4. These parallels show that the claim which the goddess makes in the last lines of the proem was not an unusual one in poetry.

[29] Although this point has a crucial significance, it has received little attention in scholarly analysis. Only Fränkel and Untersteiner have observed the shift in the voice of authority in the different parts of the poem. Fränkel observed that *σύ* in the proem refers to Parmenides, whereas in the main part it actually refers to Parmenides' audience (1975, p. 365). According to Untersteiner, it cannot be with much certainty dismissed that the real speaker in the poem is Parmenides (1967, LXXX). In a similar fashion, Gigon contended that it is impossible to tell whether the goddess is differentiated from Parmenides (1968, p. 288). Tarán objected that this is an unnecessary hypothesis, since *βροτοί* obviously suggests that the speech is uttered from the standpoint of a goddess. This question is discussed further below.

B5.1-2: ξυνὸν δέ μοί ἐστιν,
ὁππόθεν ἄρξομαι· τόθι γὰρ πάλιν ἵξομαι αὖθις
B6.2-3: τά σ' ἐγὼ φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα
ἀφ' ὁδοῦ ταύτης διζήσιος εἶργω
B7.2: ἀλλὰ σὺ τῆσδ' ὁδοῦ διζήσιος εἶργε νόημα
μηδέ σ' ἔθος πολύπειρον κατὰ τήνδε βιάσθω,
νωμᾶν ἄσκοπον ὄμμα καὶ ἠχήεσσαν ἀκουήν
καὶ γλῶσσαν, κρῖναι δὲ λόγῳ πολύδηριν ἔλεγχον
ἐξ ἐμέθεν ῥηθέντα.
B8.7-8: οὐδ' ἐκ μὴ ἐόντος ἐάσσω/ φάσθαι σ' οὐδὲ νοεῖν
B8.35-6: οὐ γὰρ ἄνευ τοῦ ἐόντος…/εὑρήσεις τὸ νοεῖν
B8.52: μάνθανε κόσμον ἀπατηλόν
B8.61: οὐ μή ποτέ τίς σε βροτῶν γνώμη παρελάσσῃ

It immediately becomes apparent that the all the addresses made to the second person occur in critical parts of the poem. The person to whom the divine revelation is delivered is urged to reflect upon the validity of the two available routes of inquiry, to discern those objects or concepts which are absent with the power of his thought, to avoid the route of the *μὴ ἐόν*, to learn the deceptive order of the world, to avoid being lead astray by erroneous beliefs, and to judge the message which he hears based on the power of his reason. The "goddess" on the other hand takes full responsibility for the truth which she reveals, she declares that she will return to the same point of departure in her speech, and she defines her message as an *ἔλεγχος*.

Fragment B2, in which the two routes of inquiry are introduced, encloses the moment of this transformation. It seems that from fragment B2 onwards Parmenides abandons the literary mask of the goddess and proceeds to present his personal speculations about the true nature of things. In fragment B5, moreover, the goddess makes a declaration, which was not normally made by an epic figure:

Ξυνὸν δέ μοί ἐστιν,
ὁππόθεν ἄρξωμαι. Τόθι γὰρ πάλιν ἵξομαι αὖθις.

This statement refers to the way in which the message is presented to the audience, and as such it concerns the author and not his divine patron. The idea recurs in Empedocles, and it is an indication of that the actual voice of authority in the main part of the poem belongs to Parmenides.[30]

In addition, in fragment B7 the "goddess" describes her speech as an *ἔλεγχος*, a word which obviously implies critical ability which is at the service of knowledge. This idea of a god defending the reliability of the knowledge which he discloses is completely alien to the traditional belief about poetic inspiration. After all, why would a divinity feel the need to justify her or his higher knowledge? The faith which mortals generally displayed in divine revelations was a spontaneous human reaction to the unquestionable authority of the divine, as in the case of oracular pronouncements.

These elements encourage the impression that Parmenides' goddess is not a religious figure but a literary representation of his personal voice of authority. It is Parmenides' dramatic self-image, and his way to present himself to his audience as someone who deserves their attention. It should be pointed out, however, that this identification of Parmenides' voice with the divine does not also imply that he viewed himself as divine.[31] In the proem Parmenides never dispels his mortal status, and since the goddess is not real nor is, consequently, her divinity. Parmenides reshapes a traditional motif which he borrows from epic poetry in order to lay a claim to a higher status of authority. It is important to note at this point that some scholars have proposed that Parmenides accepted in his poetry the traditional belief pertinent to the *Einheit* of god and man. It is necessary to turn to the

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[30] Cf. e.g. B35.1-2: *αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ παλίνορσος ἐλεύσομαι ἐς πόρον ὕμνων,/τὸν πρότερον κατέλεξα*.

[31] As suggested by Bowra, who claimed that "in so describing his experiences Parmenides made himself divine" (1937, p. 105).

examination of this suggestion, because it questions the validity of our assumption that Parmenides distinguished his voice from that of the fictional figure of his inspiring deity.

W. J. Verdenius was the first to point out that it is possible to view Parmenides' relationship with the goddess as parallel with the poet's relationship with the Muses described in epic poetry. According to his interpretation in both cases divine knowledge stands side by side with human wisdom, the responsibility for which not nonetheless wholly detached from the individual.[32] He was later followed by J. Mansfeld, who further added to Verdenius' argument that in the poem of Parmenides the goddess initiates the cooperation of the human and the divine for the acquisition of knowledge.[33] There is, however, one crucial difference in Parmenides. Unlike the standard motif of inspiration in poetry, the goddess who reveals knowledge does not descend to the human world, but it is Parmenides who travels to her realm.[34]

When Phemius begs Odysseus in the *Odyssey* to spare his life, he invokes his respected position in society, which he justifies as follows:

> αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν οἵμας
> παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν· ἔοικα δέ τοι παραείδειν ὥς τε θεῷ.[35]

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[32] Cf. Verdenius (1942), pp. 11 and 13 respectively. According to his interpretation, the proem describes a religious experience, although, Verdenius goes on to observe, it should not be taken at its face value (p. 67).

[33] Cf. Mansfeld (1964, pp. 251-2). For the view that the revelation of the goddess is an unusual one, see also Curd (2004, p. 20).

[34] This inversion of the traditional *topos* is another indication of that the goddess is a stylistic fallacy. The *ὕμνοι κλητικοί* show that the standard way to ask for divine intervention was to ask for the god to come down to the human world and not the opposite. Cf. Hes. *Th.* 9-10: *ἔνθεν* (sc. Helicon's peak) *ἀπορνύμεναι…στεῖχον*; Pind. *Ol.* 3.4: *Μοῖσα παρέστα μοι*; Sapph. fr. 1. 6-7: (to Aphrodite) *ἔκλυες, πάτρος δὲ δόμον λίποισα χρυσίον ἦλθες*; A 43-4: *τοῦδ' ἔκλυε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων/ βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμποιο*; E 121: *τοῦδ' ἔκλυε Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη,/ γυῖα δ' ἔθηκεν ἐλαφρά, πόδας καὶ χεῖρας ὑπέρθεν/ ἀγχοῦ δ' ἱσταμένη ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα*; K 291: *ὥς νῦν μοι ἐθέλουσα παρίσταο καί με φύλασσε*; and Ψ 770: *κλῦθι, θεά, ἀγαθή μοι…ἐλθέ*.

[35] Cf. χ 347-9. The parallel was first adduced by Mansfeld (1964, p. 250). Cf. also, Fränkel (1951, p. 164 ff.); Snell (1955, p. 149); and Verdenius (1948, p. 12 ff.).

Phemius' justification of his authority shows that he feels no contradiction between human and divine responsibility in knowing. The same belief does not appear in the opening of Parmenides' poem, since Parmenides is clearly distinguished from the divine. For this reason he is referred to as *ἀθανάτοισι συνάορος* (line 24) but never as *ἰσόθεος*.[36] This opposes directly the statement which Phemius make that he is able to sing *ὣς θεῷ* in the citation quoted above. However, it is necessary to note that this does not imply that Phemius thought of himself as a god. What he means with this phrase is that he is *able* to sing as *if* he were a god.

There is, furthermore, another crucial difference between the knowledge which the divine personage bestows in either case. The Muse is said to provide Phemius with the *οἴμας*, which his song follows. These "paths of song" possibly refer to the narrative techniques used in oral epic poetry, such as the use of traditional formulae, either phrases or motifs. To Parmenides on the other hand the goddess imparts a kind of unusual skill which takes the form of an *ἔλεγχος*, i.e. critical judgement (B7.5).[37] This ability to think in a reasonable, and therefore safe, manner is considered central in Parmenides' account for acquiring valid knowledge about the cosmos.[38]

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[36] For an extensive study on *θεοφιλία*, cf. Dirlmeier (1935).

[37] Lloyd thus understood the claim which the goddess makes in B7.5 as proof that the goddess differs from any other traditional god of poetry. In his view, the original demonstration of the qualities of the *ἐόν* in the main part of the poem, have nothing in common with traditional divine authority (cf. 1987, p. 60, and especially n.37). In a similar fashion, Nussbaum held that the ability of the goddess to think is her basic characteristic, although he did not go as far as to distinguish between two different voices of authority in the poem (cf. 1979, p. 69). According to Engelhard, furthermore, argumentation is not a common feature of divine revelation (1996, p. 267). He thus concludes in his analysis that humans have the capacity to reach knowledge on their own and unaided by the gods. For Curd on the other hand there is no contrast between the divine authorization of Parmenides' truth and his use of rational judgement (2004, p. 20).

[38] Cf. B1.28-32.

Verdenius provided in his analysis one further proof of that the whole poem is uttered from the standpoint of a god. In his view this is manifested in the regular references made to *βροτοί*.[39] It is important to examine this point which Verdenius makes, because it *prima facie* threatens the reliability of our proposal that the actual voice of authority in the poem belongs to Parmenides and not to the goddess. Parmenides mentions the *βροτοί* in the following lines of his poem:

B1.30: βροτῶν δόξαις, ταῖς οὐκ ἔνι πίστις ἀληθής
B6.4: αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ τῆς [sc. μὴ ἐόντος ὁδοῦ],
ἥν δὴ βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν
πλάττονται, δίκρανοι· ἀμηχανίη γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν
στήθεσιν ἰθύνει πλακτὸν νόον
B8.39: ὅσσα βροτοὶ κατέθεντο πεποιθότες εἶναι ἀληθῆ,
γίγνεσθαί τε ὄλλυσθαι, εἶναί τε καὶ οὐχί
B8.51: δόξας δ' ἀπὸ τοῦδε βροτείας
μάνθανε κόσμον ἐμῶν ἐπέων ἀπατηλὸν ἀκούων
B8.61: ὡς οὐ μή ποτέ τίς σε βροτῶν γνώμη παρελάσσῃ

Parmenides refers to men as *βροτοί*, whenever he wants to point out to their ignorance on specific matters.[40] This in turn speaks volumes about the rather polemical function which this word carries in his poem. Parmenides thus reproaches the *βροτοί* because their views lack proof (B1, *πίστις ἀληθής*) as well as method (B6, *ἀμηχανίη*), and because they place their trust in the *μὴ ἐόν* route (B6, B8.39). In his view, all these generate the mistaken acceptance as true of profoundly erroneous views (B6, *πλακτόν νόον*; B8.52, *κόσμον*

[39] Cf. Verdenius (1942).

[40] Coxon is not exactly right when he takes *βροτοί* to refer exclusively to "philosophers". In his view this is manifested in that Parmenides discusses in his poem the *ὁδοί διζήσεως* (1986, pp. 159 and 183). According to his interpretation, *βροτοί* refers to those who allow themselves to be lead astray by visual reality (cf. also, Snell (1955), p. 147). It is not compelling to accept however that only philosophers can know and there is nothing in the text which can provide support for this view. It seems that Parmenides' remarks refer to mankind in general and to a specific class of individuals. For other interpretations in support of this view, cf. Reinhardt (1916, p. 68); Verdenius (1942, p. 56 ff.); Gigon (1945, p. 258); Jaeger (1967, pp. 101 and 226 n.36); and Fränkel (1951, p. 404).

ἀπατηλόν; B8.61, *παρελάσσῃ*). It then seems that *βροτοί* does not denote in Parmenides the contrast between human and divine nature, as in epic poetry. It refers rather to the general failure of men to realise the truth and, more importantly, to perceive that specific knowledge which Parmenides discloses in his poem.

As such it establishes a different and inferior level of understanding, and it therefore suggests that Parmenides assumes for himself a standpoint of authority, when he speaks to his audience. It is unwise, however, to identify this standpoint with that of a god, as in Verdenius' examination. It is a standpoint of superiority, which is nonetheless always associated in Parmenides with the status of knowing the truth and, more specifically, the truth about cosmic reality.[41]

2. Parmenides' choice of verse in connection with his authority claims

If the goddess is part of Parmenides' style, and if, consequently, her revelation is no revelation at all, then the question which naturally arises, is why would Parmenides employ such a literary device in the presentation of his ideas, or, in other words, why would he use a lie in order to present his truth.[42] Starting with Cornford some scholars have interpreted Parmenides' choice of verse as the most adequate verbal medium which enforces the

[41] Engelhard thus argued that with Parmenides "philosophy" was made a human responsibility (1996, p. 146).

[42] The ancient compiler of the Suda lexicon found Parmenides' preference for verse odd, and thus assumed that he also wrote other works *καταλογάδην*. In a similar fashion, Plutarch claims that one can perhaps blame Parmenides for having expressed a cosmology in hexameters (*de rect. rat. aud*., 45B1). According to Proclus, furthermore, Parmenides' style bears more similarities with prose rather than with standard verse (*In Prm.*, 665, 30). It seems that it was hard for the ancient commentators to accept Parmenides' choice of verse for the publication of a cosmology, which for them is, of course, an area of philosophy.

memorability of the account which he wishes to present.[43] It is certainly true that the rhythmic pattern of verse assisted the audience in remembering Parmenides' words. Taken alone however, this justification does not provide Parmenides' choice of verse with enough reason.

A different proposal which some scholars have made is that verse was generally considered an adequate medium for instructing an audience.[44] This suggestion is attractive, especially because the main part of the proem displays a didactic quality which is hard to overlook. The intention to instruct an audience, however, is not a matter of verbal style alone but of mind, and as such the two are distinguished. Writing in verse, that is to say, does not immediately imply the desire to teach. The content of the message which is thereby delivered however does.[45]

Ancient scholars explained the application of verse by Parmenides as choice made *pro forma*. Plutarch thus held that Parmenides used *ὥσπερ ὄχημα τὸ μέτρον* in order to avoid the flatness of prose,[46] while Diogenes observed Parmenides' keenness for metaphors.[47] Proclus, furthermore, was the first to observe the disparity between Parmenides taste for metaphors in the opening

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[43] Cf. esp. Cornford (1957, pp. 255-6; 1952, pp. 120-1), but also Verdenius (1942, p. 2) *contra* Mourelatos (2008, pp. 45-6). Burnet on the other hand argued that Parmenides used verse, because he wanted in this way to follow the Pythagorean tradition (1930, p. 171). This perspective of Parmenides' authority claims is discussed in the following section. At any event, the surviving evidence from the Orphic literature consists mainly in collections of hymns and ritual prayers, which reveal a rather specific religious function.

[44] Cf. Mansfeld (1964, p. 251), Freeman (1966, p. 141), and more recently Wright (1997, p. 6).

[45] Thus Osborne was very right in drawing attention to this subtle difference (1997, pp. 23-4, 26). She argues that the early cosmologists did not choose the medium of their expression *consciously*, and that it is anachronistic to think that they did.

[46] Cf. Plut. *quom. adol. poet. aud. deb.* 16C.11.

[47] Cf. Diog. Laert. *Vit. philos.* 8.57: *μεταφορικός τε ὤν*.

of his poem and the clarity with which he presents his doctrine in the main part of his poem, in which he read a prosaic quality.[48]

Modern scholars have observed that the clumsiness of Parmenides' hexameters suggests his difficulty to express his cosmology-ontology in a verbal medium which was not normally used for the publication of such a message. This is also suggested by the fact that, as Mourelatos observes, Parmenides' hexameters are not particularly competent when judged by poetic standards.[49] According to Mourelatos this implies that Parmenides is chiefly concerned with arguing rather than with conforming with the tradition of poetry. In a similar vein, Barnes read in Parmenides an "impenetrable obscurity", which he attributed to his unusual application of verse for the publication of his message.[50]

Parmenides' choice of verse can be easily explained, however, when taking into consideration that this medium was by far the most favourable, and indeed suitable, medium for the oral presentation of ideas in ancient Greek society.[51] Parmenides' use or, if you like, misuse of epic verse, was further encouraged by the nature of archaic communication.[52] K. Reinhardt thus held that in the times of Parmenides the most abstract ideas could only

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[48] Cf. Procl. *In Prm.* 665.30. Proclus claims that the *μεταφοραὶ ὀνομάτων*, *σχήματα*, and *τροπαί* constitute the fundamental poetic features of Parmenides' account. To these he contrast the *ἀκαλλώπιστον*, *ἰσχνόν*, and *καθαρὸν* style which Parmenides employs in the main part of his poem.

[49] Cf. Guthrie (1965, p. 4) and Mourelatos (2008, p. 35) respectively, but also, Gallop (1984, p. 4). Osborne on the other hand claims that Parmenides, like Empedocles, was a gifted poet, while Gomperz maintained that the Greek frame of mind required imaginative and poetical expression (cf. 1997, p. 26 and 1969, p. 178 respectively). Such an interpretation of Parmenides' style, however, deprives his choice of verse from the importance it has in connection with that Parmenides is in this way trying to establish himself as a reliable voice of authority by contrasting his alternative truth to that already acknowledged as prestigious knowledge in his society.

[50] Cf., Barnes (1982, p. 155).

[51] For scholarly views which point out to the popularity of the medium of verse, see Freeman (1966, p. 141); Wright (1997, p. 6); and Osborne (1997, p. 30).

[52] For an analysis of which, see the relevant section in the introduction.

be expressed through myth.[53] It is certainly true that the employment of myth in the presentation of a difficult message facilitates the understanding of the audience. However, scholars who have examined the exact function of the epic nuances in Parmenides all agree that he subverts the traditional material in order to express a novel idea.[54] In so doing Parmenides is placing standard epic phrasing in fresh cosmological context.

The outcome of the way in which Parmenides treats the traditional material of epic poetry is that it brings about a feeling of familiarity. This is vital for the successful delivery of his message, because in this way it facilitates the understanding of his startling cosmological message. It then seems that Parmenides used the poetic medium of verse in his publication not because he considered himself a poet, but because he believed that his message was as socially important as that of poetry.

Another explanation of Parmenides' choice of verse which has been suggested argues that for Parmenides divine revelation was intrinsically connected with the process of acquiring knowledge, and that for this reason Parmenides had to use the medium of verse.[55] However, the motif of divine inspiration in poetry was founded upon the genuine belief that charismatic individuals could be contacted by the divine, which also endorsed the reliability of their account. Our analysis in the previous section has suggested that there is considerable evidence in support of the view that Parmenides

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[53] Cf. Reinhardt (1974, p. 301).

[54] For an examination of the epic nuances in Parmenides, see Floyd (1992); Wright (1997, pp. 6-13); Mourelatos (2008, ch. 1, and esp., pp. 5-6, 39); Popper (1998, p. 111); Gallop (1984, pp. 4-5), and Coxon (1986, pp. 9-11). Coxon argues that Parmenides occasionally relies exclusively on the audience's familiarity with epic poetry in order to deliver his personal message (1986, p. 11). For the importance of Parmenides' appropriation of traditional material in connection with his authority claims, see Wright (1997, pp. 9 and 22).

[55] So according to Freeman (1966, p. 141); Mansfeld (1964, p. 273); and Guthrie (1965, p. 4). See also Fränkel (1975, p. 351, n.2) and Vernant (1983, p. 353). Reinhardt on the other hand contended that divine revelation is only the surface cover of Parmenides' philosophy (1974, p. 301).

employed in the proem familiar epic language in the form of an allegory. This is partly suggested by that in the main part of the poem, the presence of the goddess gradually fades into a voice of authority which seems to belong to Parmenides. At any event, the real guarantee for Parmenides' account is not drawn from a god but from his rigorous reasoning, which is overtly manifested in fragment B8.

It cannot be therefore safely argued that Parmenides composed a poem because he sincerely believed in divine inspiration. At the same time, however, it does seem likely that he opted for verse, because he identified the metaphor of "journey" with man's quest for knowledge. This is the only image which remains operative throughout the poem, and which is closely related to Parmenides' thought, as becomes apparent from fragment B2.[56]

3. Parmenides as a religious figure

i) Parmenides as a shaman

Some early interpretations of Parmenides' poem have interpreted the opening of his work as the description of the celestial journey of the shaman.[57] It is for this reason important to turn to the question of whether Parmenides' authority claims can be identified with that of the shaman, and to examine the

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[56] For the same conclusion, see Mourelatos (2008, p. 29, and esp., p. 46), but also Mansfeld (1964, pp. 222-3).

[57] Cf. Diels (2009, p. 14 ff.), Dodds (1951, ch. 5), Cornford (1952, p. 118), Guthrie (1965, pp. 11-3), who is careful to not overrate the influence of the religious background in Parmenides' language, but also Meuli's very influential study (1935, p. 171 ff.). This reading has been recently revived by Henn (2003, esp. p. 51). Henn makes the attractive suggestion that Parmenides was a shaman, because his thought reconciles the tension between mutually contradictory principles, such as light and darkness, future and past, and generation and decay. It is important to point out, however, that these pairs of conflicting notions, is not central to the actual message of Parmenides, and that the basic properties of the *ἐόν* in B8 assume no such element. In fact, Parmenides directly opposes to the concept of regarding as true both what is and what is not in B2.

probability of whether such a type of authority claims was possible in Parmenides' epoch.[58]

If we turn to the surviving evidence from Greek literature, we discover that the descriptions of shamans concern legendary and mainly non-Greek figures. Aristeas of Proconnesus, son of Democharis, was an *ἐποποιός*, who composed a poem on the history of the Hyperborean people of Arimaspoi, also known as *Ἀριμάσπεια*, and a theogony in prose. According to the Suda lexicon, furthermore, he was able to disassociate his soul from his body at will. Herodotus records a story about Aristeas, according to which when Aristeas died, and everyone in his town knew that he was dead, a man from another city claimed that he had seen him there. The fellow-citizens of Aristeas then opened up his grave only to find to their astonishment that his body was missing. After seven years, Herodotus goes on to say, Aristeas returned to his home town and sang his poem *Ἀριμάσπεια*.[59]

Abaris was a man from Scythia, son of Apollo, and therefore gifted with a natural skill in prophecy. He wrote a prose theogony and a poem about the technique of purification.[60] According to Herodotus, he travelled

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[58] The study of Meuli has thoroughly examined the influence of the shamanistic trend on the Greeks. According to Meuli, the elements which suggest Parmenides' claim to the authority of the shaman are the "Ich-Erzählung", the "direkte Rede" in the proem, the "Göttersprache", and the *ὁδός*-motif (1935, p. 173). It is important to distinguish, however, that these elements do not account exclusively for the authority of the shaman. The authoritative-I which Parmenides frequently employs in the proem may also imply his desire to lay a claim to a higher status of knowing, and as such it does not relate to the *definition* of this status. His encounter with the goddess, furthermore, and the *ὁδός* motif constitute two major aspects of his metaphorical language, and of the way in which he treats the traditional expression of the *epos*. It seems that Parmenides' audience would for this reason immediately associate his poem with the epic tradition rather than with shamanism.

[59] Cf. Hes. *Hist.* 4.13-5. Herodotus also tells us that when Aristeas reached the land of the *Ἰσσηδόνας* he became *φοιβόλαμπτος*. In addition, Diels read the figure of Aristeas the blending of Ionian *ἱστορίη* with religious ecstasy (2003, p. 21).

[60] Cf. Sud. *sub Ἀριστέας*.

around the world upon an arrow,[61] while Plato mentions him in connection with chants and charms (*ἐπῳδαί*) as opposed to medicine proper.[62]

Zalmoxis was also Scythian and was said to have believed that his soul was immortal, for which reason ancient commentators associated him with the Pythagorean tradition. According to the Suda, once he became a Greek (and therefore he is the only case of a shaman who was intergraded in the Greek society) he taught *τελετάς* to the Thracian Getae and persuaded them to believe in the immortality of their soul.[63] He then disappeared for four years and when he returned he was widely respected in his society for his knowledge. Ancient tradition mentions no works of Zalmoxis, which in turn implies that he relied on oral teaching.

To begin with, these known cases of shamans are not entirely incorporated into the Greek tradition. The relevant references made in Greek literature are infrequent, and they occur mainly in Herodotus, who is known to be fascinated by such stories of the extraordinary, and from whom the Suda draws with minor differentiations on some points. Even Herodotus, however, is expresses his disbelief about the actuality of these stories about the shamans.[64] At any event, the remoteness of these examples from the Greek reality is also manifested in that they are linked mainly with the North, at best

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[61] Cf. Hdt, *Hist.* 4.36.

[62] Cf. Pl. *Charm.* 158b.

[63] Cf. Sud. *sub Ζάλμοξις*, according to which source he *Ἑλληνικὸς γεγονώς*. Cf. also Hdt. *Hist.* 4.95-6, who also credits Zalmoxis with the ability to prophecise. Plato mentions Zalmoxis as an *ἰατρός* (although *ἰατρομάντις* is more appropriate), who preached about the immortality of the soul (*Charm.*, 156d). Plato attributed to Zalmoxis the belief that in order to cure the body one should firstly heal the soul, which in his view is what the Greek doctors failed to realise. Dodds, furthermore, read the story about Zalmoxis as an attempt to "rationalise Greek shamanism" (1951, p.162, n. 39). For the understanding of *ψυχή* as an organ of consciousness with a non-rational intuition, cf. Soph. *El.* 902: *ἐμπαίει τί μοι/ ψυχῆ σύνηθες ὄμμα…τοῦθ' ὁρᾶν τεκμήριον*; and Antiph. 5.93.

[64] Cf. Hdt. *Hist.* 4.96. When it comes to expressing his own opinion about his account, Herodotus says: *ἐγὼ οὔτε ἀπιστέω οὔτε πιστεύω*.

with the larger region of Thrace, yet not with the Greek mainland, the Aegean, Ionia, or *Magna Graecia*, where the heart of Greek civilization beat.

The only known case of an authentically Greek shaman is that of the Cretian Epimenides. His figure, however, is far too shrouded by myth to allow the assumption that the practice of shamanism was common in ancient Greece. To this we may add the example of the Greek shaman Aithalides, for whom Apollonius Rhodius is our exclusive source. He records Pherecydes' information, according to which Aithalides received the skill of prophecy from Hermes, he sometimes descended to Hades, and he was able also to ascend to the *ὑπὲρ τὴν γῆν τόποις*.[65] In this testimony, the *katabasis* seems to be the Greek adaptation of the shaman's celestial journey. At any event, apart from this random comment of Apollonius Aithalides is otherwise completely unknown.

It then becomes apparent that the figures of the shamans which appear in Greek literature are not common and that they are the Greek interpretation of a foreign custom. It seems that the ancient sources adapt shamanism according to familiar figures from Greek life, such as that of the *μάγος*. The point here is that there is no substantial evidence for an authentic Greek shaman, which in turn implies that this custom was not widespread amongst the Greeks, although it was not completely unknown to them either.

The obvious similarities between Parmenides and Greek "shamans" are traced in the choice of the same medium of expression, and the motif of the journey, the final aim of which is the acquisition of knowledge.[66] Our examination of Parmenides' preference for the medium of verse, however, in the previous section has suggested that it had a rather specific function in his

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[65] Cf. Pherecydes fr. 8 (FrGrHist.).

[66] For general discussions, cf. Diels (2003, pp.14-21); Meuli (1935, esp. pp. 171-2); Cornford (1952, p. 118); Morrison (1955, p. 59); Guthrie (1965, pp. 11-3); Mourelatos (2008, p. 42-44); Kingsley (1999, p. 62 and p. 72-3); and Verdenius (1949, p. 121-3, 125, and 128).

presentation in connection with the nature of his authority claims. The employment of verse by Parmenides implied the importance of his message, it contributed in its successful delivery, and it finally aimed in establishing a new type of authoritative knowledge by questioning existing forms of traditional knowledge. In terms of the motif of travelling in the opening of Parmenides' poem, it is important to remind the reader that, as our analysis in the previous section has argued, the proem does not record a real experience. At any event, the celestial journey of the shaman required him to enter a state of, as Dodds put it, "mental disassociation", and there is nothing in Parmenides' poem to suggest such a notion.[67]

It is also unlikely that the Greeks could perceive the soul independently from the body, or at least this idea was not a common one in Greek civilization. E.R. Dodds, for example, has argued that the soul was rarely distinguished from the body, in which case it was also taken to be the seat of emotions rather of intelligence.[68] In the *Nekyia*, furthermore, in which we actually have a *katabasis* to the underworld and not an *anabasis* to the heavens, Odysseus travels in the full form of his living existence, namely in both body and soul. The dead he encounters in Hades of course have no material body, although they do have however a kind of immaterial visual image which resembles the form which they had, when they were alive. In addition, when the deceased are given blood to drink, which stands for the element of life, they recovered for a short period of time the personality which

[67] Cf. Dodds (1951, p. 140), who provides a description of the key characteristics which distinguish a shaman. According to Dodds, the shaman derives the skill of manticism, poetry, and sorcery from his ability to travel to distant places. It is also worthy of note that Levi-Strauss argues that modern shamanism has an intellectual colour. In his view, although the practice of magic in the ritual of the shaman refers to an emotional situation, the core of the expertise of the shaman is intellectual, since it requires the *γνῶσις* of a particular *ars* (1963, p. 184).

[68] Cf. Dodds (1951, p. 139).

they had in real life. This description in the *Nekyia* suggests that the Greeks did not generally perceive the living soul separately from the body.

It is possible to trace in Parmenides the same notion. In the first line of his poem *με* indicates that the mares transfer him in the totality of his existence, and that they do not carry just his spirit. Parmenides also claims that he travels as far as his *θυμός* allows him to, but he never claims that he travels *by* the power of his *θυμός*. In addition, he is escorted by the Sun maidens and he does not retreat for solitude as in the case of the shaman. His journey is, furthermore, supervised by these divine persons (B1.5: *κοῦραι ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον*), whereas the progression of the shaman towards an extraordinary reality is never accompanied or supervised by a divinity. The shaman transcends the mundane point of view through personal isolation from his society, in which case he is considered by his fellow citizens to be either deceased or missing. Parmenides apparently claims in the opening of his poem that he travelled, as in the Greek stories about shamans, *κατὰ πάντ' ἄστη* (B1.3). However, it seems that this phrase has a rather different function in his poem. It is meant to evoke the example of wise Odysseus, and to imply the *ὁδός* motif, which persists throughout the poem, as argued in the previous section.

Last but certainly not least, it cannot be claimed with much certainty that the journey of Parmenides is definitely located in the heavens. This is so, especially because he generally seems to avoid in the proem explicit identifications either in terms of places or in terms of persons. If we wish however to look for evidence which might perhaps suggest the topography of Parmenides' journey, then the information that the Sun maidens depart from the *δώματα νυκτός* and that they move *εἰς φάος* (B1.9-10) provides us with some guidance. Parmenides says, furthermore, that he stands in front of the gates of both night and day before he enters the realm of the goddess (B1.11). But there is no compelling reason to accept that Parmenides identifies the

gates of door and night with the sky. It seems more plausible to assume that he is here speaking in a metaphorical language, according to which day corresponds to knowledge, while night corresponds to the *preceding* state of ignorance.

The stories about shamans in Greek literature also reveal another different and yet crucial aspect of shamanistic expertise. They were particularly well-received and popular in their society.[69] Their skill was regarded, furthermore, as socially important, and it consisted mainly in the ability to prophesise but also in the ability to perform sorcery. In the case of the shamans the ability to perform miraculous actions (such as the disappearance or his presence in places where he was least expected to be) actually sanctioned his superior status. To this we may contrast Parmenides' rigid proof and rigorous reasoning, which he displays in fragment B8, and which stands in sharp opposition with the un-argued for superiority of the shaman. It therefore becomes apparent that there is no serious reason to lend our support to the view that Parmenides truly considered himself a shaman.

ii) Parmenides as a prophet

Some scholars have interpreted Parmenides' authority claims as prophetic on grounds of the "apocalyptic" language which he apparently uses in the proem.[70] Verdenius thus interpreted the speech of the goddess as the

[69] According to Levi-Strauss modern shamans draw their social success from their ability to combine empirical knowledge with experimental techniques (1963, p. 180). They also deserve to claim social recognition, because with the practice of their art they fulfil the expectations of their social group, as in the case of curing a patient (p. 168). Another element which is vital for the establishment of the authority of the shaman is that each time he heals a patient he offers his audience a performance, which is an actual re-enactment of his call (p. 180).

[70] Cf. e.g. Guthrie (1965, p. 6); Cornford (1939, p. 28; and 1952, p. 120); Vernant (1983, p. 353); Henn (2003, p. 8); and Diels (2003, p. 68), who reads in the phrase *βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδὲν* the "Stil des Prophetentums" to those ignorant. So also according to

revelation of an oracle. In his view, this is manifested in that she addresses Parmenides as *κοῦρος*, which he took in his analysis as a parallel to the address of a *chresmologos* in Aristophanes as *θέσπιος κοῦρος* by old Peisthetaerus.[71] L. Tarán objected, however, that the goddess calls Parmenides a *κοῦρος*, because she wants in this way to imply the difference between the human and the divine nature.[72]

To begin with, it seems that the parallel from Aristophanes which Verdenius quotes is remote, and cannot account for the fact that the *kouros* address always implied the skill of the prophet. It is an isolated example, and for this reason it is hard to accept it as evidence that *kouros* was a standard way to refer to a prophet. In addition, it has been argued in the previous section that in the main part of the poem the voice of authority is passed on from the goddess to Parmenides. This redistribution of voices (though not of roles, since Parmenides in never identified with the divine) in the poem

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Bowra (1937, p. 110). *Contra* these interpretations cf. Cosgrove (1974, p. 88), who concludes that the *κοῦρος* address is an appropriation of a traditional epic motif. In addition, some scholars have interpreted the *κοῦρος* as autobiographical. Cf., Burnet (1932, p. 50); Heidel in Furley-Allen (1970, pp. 350-1); Cornford (1939, p. 146); and Reinhardt (1916, p. 111), who thus concludes that Parmenides' poem was a "Jugendwerk", while Meyer dated the poem in 475 BC based on this evidence (1925, pp. 226-7). There is no compelling reason to accept however that the poem has a "crude", "uncompromising", and "immature" tone, as these views suggest. Nor is it exactly clear why Parmenides would feel the need to give away such information to his audience. For a detailed objection to this interpretation, see also Cosgrove (1974, p. 84 ff.).

[71] Cf. Aristoph. *Av.* 977, and its citation by Verdenius (1947, p. 285). Verdenius' suggestion was later followed by Guthrie (1965, p. 2, n. 2), who views Parmenides as the recipient of the goddess' oracle as well as her disciple.

[72] Cf. Tarán (1965), *ad* B1. He further adds that it is an instant characterization of Parmenides, since it refers to the very moment of the revelation. Burkert later agreed with this when he remarked that the *κοῦρος* address shows Parmenides at the peak of his rank in facing the divine (1969, p. 14). See also Patin (1899, p. 643). *Contra* this view, cf. Cosgrove (1974, esp. p. 90). According to Mourelatos the status of the Parmenides in the proem is that of a *ξένος*, perhaps of an *ἱκέτης* (2008, p. 147). Coxon, furthermore, rightly observed that the *kouros* address retains in Parmenides the honorific quality it has in epic poetry (1986, p. 167).

further implies that the goddess is a literary device, and that it is not therefore plausible to take her presence in the opening as evidence for the description of a religious scene.

She is perhaps addressing Parmenides as *kouros* in order to express her favour towards him without necessarily implying a contrast between the human and the divine. In so doing she is also asking him to pay heed to her words. It is thus an implicit reference to the nature of the relationship which Parmenides has with the goddess. This intimacy however is quite distinct from the one which the *μύστης* experienced in a religious sect. As M.R. Cosgrove reasonably argues, this intimacy may perhaps suggest that Parmenides is at the beginning of his journey, and that *kouros* thus refers to his inexperience.[73]

F. M. Cornford has made the attractive suggestion that Parmenides' authority claims should be viewed as prophetic, because his truth refers to a timeless and reality, as in the case of prophetic knowledge.[74] It is impossible to overlook the fact that Parmenides' truth generally shares the same a-temporal quality with prophetic pronouncements. At the same time, however, these two types of a-temporality are distinguished in one crucial respect. The prophet does not conceive of a single intelligent order and he does not have the knowledge of one single truth which remains valid regardless of a change in the time perspective. The prophet, in other words, knows the past, present, and future, but not in total. Parmenides on the other hand perceives an abstract entity, namely the *ἐόν*, which is the same truth which applies in past, present, and future.

M. Furth argues that the fact that Parmenides has to describe in his poem the deceptive route of *μὴ ἐόν* although he clearly dismisses it as unreliable in fragment B2 suggests that he has to explain his message to the

[73] Cf. Cosgrove (1974, p. 88).
[74] Cf. Cornford (1952, p. 118).

mortals thus paying the "price of prophecy".[75] In the relevant section of the introduction, however, we have pointed out that the belief about the intentional ambiguity of prophetic pronouncements was largely due to misrepresentations in literature, and that it was not the actual style of prophetic utterance. In addition, it seems that the prophets were not at serious pains to justify the validity of their knowledge to their audience, since their communion with the divine authenticated the reliability of their truth. At any event, Parmenides' insertion of the *Doxa* route in his account does not *explain* the content of his message. It simply provides the audience with a version of misleading probabilities which they should avoid mistaking for true.

iii) Parmenides as a Pythagorean mystic

Ancient commentators occasionally viewed Parmenides' authority claims in connection with Pythagoreanism. Strabo thus referred to Parmenides as an *ἀνὴρ Πυθαγόρειος*, while Photius remarked that he was of a *Πυθαγορείου διατριβῆς*.[76] In a somewhat similar fashion some modern scholars have proposed that the symbolic language which Parmenides employs in the proem accounts for his conviction that the discovery of knowledge is in itself a religious activity.[77]

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[75] Cf. Furth (1974, p. 270).

[76] Cf. Strab. *Geogr.* VI.1; and Photius *Bibl.* 249.

[77] Firstly suggested by Bowra (1937, p. 112), and followed by Vlastos (1946, p. 75). Vlastos later revised his interpretation in his review of Cornford, in which he concluded that Parmenides cannot be altogether dismissed as a mystic, since the goddess appeals to his critical ability, which opposes the very nature of mysticism (1955, p. 49). In a similar fashion, Vernant held that Parmenides employs mystical vocabulary, for which see analysis below (1983, p. 353). According to Zafiropoulo, furthermore, Parmenides' poem is a representation of the ceremony of initiation in the Pythagorean sect (1950, p. 94 ff.). Cosgrove has objected however that such interpretations fail to view Parmenides' poem as a coherent whole, since they are exclusively limited to the proem (1974, p. 88). In a similar vein, Prier observed that

It is important to note, however, that "symbols" as an element of literary style are quite distinct from the symbols normally used in mystic communication. In this case they function as literary expressions which hint at something else, which nonetheless takes the form of a metaphor or of an allegory. For this reason they are an essential aspect of style, and they do not address a specific audience of chosen individuals. They therefore impose no barrier, at least not intentionally, against those who fail to understand their implied message. Our previous examination of the proem, furthermore, has suggested that Parmenides relies heavily upon his audience's familiarity with the epic *topoi*, which he exploits in order to make himself understood but not in order to address a specifically limited audience. His account is thus not a deliberate concealment of truth, as in the case of mystical cults, but the exact opposite. It aims in un-concealing the truth about the *ἐόν*, and in bringing this truth to the attention of the audience.

When Parmenides discusses the true properties of the *ἐόν* in fragment B8, which constitute the core of his doctrine, he can hardly be taken to talk in symbols. In purely religious language, however, symbols convey an element of exclusion, since the initiates are not so much those who can understand the symbol, but those who know its real meaning. And they know its meaning, moreover, because it was revealed to them in private secrecy. This presumably took place in the ceremony of the initiation of the *μύστης*.

The only phrase in Parmenides which *prima facie* provides serious evidence that he is perhaps using apocalyptic vocabulary in his poem is that of *εἰδότα φῶτα* in line B1.3.[78] It is disputed whether Parmenides is already a

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the symbols which Parmenides employs in the proem later occur in the main part in a strictly logical context.

[78] So according to Bowra (1937, p. 109), Verdenius (1942, p. 11, n.3), Cornford (1952, p. 110), Mansfeld (1964, p. 223), Furley (1973, p. 3), Coxon (1986, pp. 158-9), and Diels (2009, p. 23), who takes this phrase as evidence for that Parmenides speaks to his "Vertrauten". It is hard to decisively dismiss, however, the possibility that

"man who knows" at the beginning of his journey or not.[79] A. H. Coxon, however, has pointed out that Parmenides cannot be in the position to know what will be later on revealed to him by the goddess. He thus interpreted the phrase *εἰδότα φῶτα*, as the necessary condition which permits Parmenides to travel to the goddess.[80]

In addition, it is possible to read *εἰδότα φῶτα* (note the singular) together with *θυμός* of the first line, and to construe it altogether as "the personal desire to know". This idea immediately brings to mind Pindar's statement that he speaks to those who are prudent (*φωνάεντα συνετοῖσιν*) without necessarily implying religious initiation or colour.[81] If this view is correct, then Parmenides is in the begging of his poem addressing *those* who are interested, like him, in acquiring knowledge. This in turn implies that he does not wish to deliver his message to a particular clique but to anyone who is willing to pay heed to his account.

It is certainly true that Pythagoreanism combined logic with religion,[82] and that mysticism in general promised to unite the human with the divine.[83]

Parmenides is perhaps addressing a larger group and not only the chosen few. In a similar vein, Gallop maintained that the unveiling of the Sun maiden strikes an apocalyptic tone (1984, p. 6). However, the unveiling of female figure in Greek literature may also be a gesture of faith and trust. At any event, the goddess does not claim to disclose a truth which is withheld from public view, but only the truth which has persistently escaped the attention of mortals. *Contra* this reading, cf. Tarán (1965, *ad* B1), and specifically against Bowra, see Cosgrove (2001, p. 88 ff.). For parallels of *εἰδότες* in the sense of *conoscente*, cf. Eur. *Rh.* 973: *σεμνὸς τοῖς εἰδόσιν θεός*; Arist. *Nub.* 1241; and Alexis, fr. 26: *τοῖς γάρ ὀρθῶς εἰδόσιν τὰ θεῖα*.

[79] Mansfeld, for instance, maintained that Parmenides already possesses knowledge when he visits the realm of the goddess (1964, p. 223). On the other hand Furley contended that Parmenides cannot be a man who knows prior to his encounter with the goddess (1973, p. 3). This view is attractive, especially when considering that to assume the opposite for Parmenides underrates the importance of her revelation.

[80] Cf. Coxon (1986, p. 159).

[81] Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 2.85.

[82] For scholars who treat this as evidence for Parmenides' Pythagoric perspective, see Cornford (1952, pp. 110, 117; and 1939, p. 29), Reinhardt (1916, p. 255), Miller (1968, p. 68), and Gomperz (1969, p. 167). Coxon's view on the issue is obscure, for while he

However, if we turn to the poem of Parmenides for signs of these two elements of mysticism, we find nothing which can seriously vouchsafe such a reading. Parmenides apparently describes the coexistence of the divine with the human, but he never unites the two in his poem. In addition, he does not display in the surviving fragments the explicit intention to teach on morality.[84] Interestingly enough, a moral aspect of Parmenides' account was also unknown to the ancient commentators. The truth is that Parmenides'

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remarks that the poem refers to the intellectual contemplation of reality, he later maintains that Parmenides presents himself in the proem as a Pythagorean philosopher (1986, p. 17 and p. 232 respectively). For recent scholarly objections to this reading on grounds that Parmenides' logic is incompatible with mysticism, see Mourelatos (2008, p. 44), who remarks that "mystery" is exactly what the goddess purports to dispel, and Hermann (2004, p. 122). To this we may add Vlastos, who although he understands Parmenides' authority claims as a blend of mysticism and logic, he nonetheless draws attention to the fact that the goddess does not say "believe" but "judge" (1946, pp. 75-6).

[83] Fränkel was the major representative of this view, and proposed that Parmenides experienced in his ecstatic inspiration a *unio mystica* with the *ἐόν* (1975, pp. 366-7). The same view is taken by Verdenius (1942, p. 11) and Henn (2003, p. 33), according to whom Parmenides' moral teaching rests upon the belief that one should try to unite with the way in which things truly are. It is not exactly clear, however, how one can possibly unite himself with the abstract concept of the *ἐόν*. Tarán objected that Parmenides' logical deduction in B8 start from existence, and that for this reason he is not concerned with defining what can qualify as a divine One (1965, p. 97). Against Fränkel's interpretation, see also Mansfeld (1964, pp. 252-9). The major point in which Mansfeld disagrees with Fränkel is that Parmenides follows a progressive logical process in his poem.

[84] It is not therefore safe to assume together with Miller that much of the theoretical framework of the "salvation of the soul" is attested in Parmenides' verses (1968, p. 68). In a similar fashion, Vlastos maintained that Parmenides wishes to correct the trusting of empirical knowledge by offering a deliverance from it (1946, p. 76). What Parmenides says, however, through the mouth of the goddess is that empirical knowledge should be dismissed as unreliable and not that it is a moral obligation to avoid it. Mourelatos is therefore right when he concludes that Parmenides' poem lacks a message of salvation, and that he deliberately avoids the use of divine epithets for the *ἐόν* (2008, pp. 44-5). Interestingly enough, Cornford and Diels, who also supported in their examinations the Pythagorean perspective of Parmenides, also observe the fact that there are simply no implications of religious faith in Parmenides' poem (cf. 1939, p. 28; and 2009, p. 21, respectively). Diels also points out that in Parmenides we do not find the same type of rationality as the one we encounter in the mystic.

poem does not disclose a method with which one can deliver his mortal soul. Quite on the contrary, the knowledge which the poem conveys pertains to a transcendental reality, which is detached from everyday experience.

In addition, this truth is deprived of a practical aspect, whereas the knowledge of the shaman or of the mystic is not. The shaman was believed to have at his disposal a stock of techniques with which he practiced sorcery, whereas the *μύστης* was expected to comply with the knowledge which was revealed to him in the sect. This implied that he had to act in his everyday life according to specific rules of morality, which were the application of this truth. In these cases, higher knowledge functioned as a life directive, which regulated the behaviour of a person or of a community. Parmenides on the other hand never proceeds to define a set of moral imperatives based upon the logical conclusions which he reaches in fragment B8. It is also highly unlikely that in Parmenides we witness a union between the divine and the human. As argued in the previous section, there is no decisive evidence that Parmenides believed in this kind of participation in the divine (*μέθεξις*) or in the *ὁμοίωσις θεῷ*, as Platonic philosophy later termed it, which was nonetheless central in the purely religious drama of the shaman or of the cults.[85]

The aim of Parmenides' account is to affirm what exists, namely the *ἐόν*, under specific conditions and in a particular form. Parmenides discovered the *ἐόν* behind the veil of visual and mundane appearances which men commonly mistake for true (*τὰ δοκοῦντα*). This element is crucial, because religion is not concerned with the reliability of semblances or with

[85] Cf. e.g. Pl. *Theat.* 176b; and Plot. *Enneades* I.2, for the assimilation to the divine as a purely intellectual activity. According to Plato, furthermore, one should seek to assimilate oneself to the divine *μετὰ φρονήσεως*, because the divine is necessarily just and wise. For Plotinus on the other hand, one the assimilation to the divine is important, because *ψυχὴ ἐγγυτέρω σώματος καὶ συγγενέστερον*. The reason for this is that the assimilation to the divine takes the form of a *παράδειγμα* (*ibid.* I.6). For Platos' understanding of love as assimilation to the divine, see also *Phdr.* 252c-253c.

the way in which the human mind should response to observable experience. Parmenides on the other hand is interested in the application of man's mental ability (*νόος*) to apprehend reality and to decide the truthfulness of available data (*κρίσις*). It is also important to note that all our evidence that Parmenides' authority claims are religious is located in the proem. It would be unwise, however, to direct our attention, when discussing the nature of these authority claims, to a specific part of the poem, because we risk taking a restricted standpoint. The understanding thus of Parmenides' authority as Pythagorean is not safe, because it also fails to provide a complete overview of his authority claims in all parts of his poem.

Felix qui potuit rerum
conoscere causas
Verg. *Georg.* 2.490

Chapter V: Empedocles

Empedocles is undoubtedly the most colourful case of all the thinkers under examination. His surviving fragments reveal a diverse personality: a cosmologist, a poet, a physician, a religious teacher, even perhaps a magician, or a mere charlatan. Modern scholars have interpreted Empedocles' authority claims as a complex combination of these experts.[1] It is for this reason crucial to examine these shades of his expertise, and to attempt to explain them in connection with Empedocles' chief concern.

1. The unity of Empedocles' thought and his two poems

According to the ancient tradition, Empedocles wrote two poems: one was entitled *Περὶ Φύσεως* and the other *Καθαρμοί*. The first was in line with the investigation of the formulation of the cosmos, while the second was a somewhat more religiously-felt take on the same topic. Quite naturally, this apparent dichotomy in Empedocles' thought has aroused much scholarly dispute.

The first attempts to explain this inconsistency were made by Diels and Wilamowitz, who held the very obvious, at least in a certain respect, view that Empedocles during a later stage of his life was spiritually converted to Pythagoreanism, and that this sealed decisively the character of his second

[1] Cf. Guthrie (1965, p. 123); Lloyd (1970, p. 137); and Vernant (1983, p. 85). According to Vernant, furthermore, Empedocles' view of himself as a *θεῖος ἀνήρ* arose from his conviction that he could at the same time be a diviner, a poet, a doctor and a leader of men. Yet it seems unlikely that Empedocles would have considered himself to be all these figures of authority at the same time.

poem, the *Katharmoi*.[2] It is certainly true that the two poems of Empedocles strike a different note. However, it is unwise to read this characteristic as a substantial piece of evidence about the real life of Empedocles. Quite on the contrary, it seems that there is nothing in the *Katharmoi* which encourages the view that it was a work of a more mature age. Such an understanding is based mainly on the modern assumption that "philosophy" comes first, while theology is bound to follow.[3]

At any event, the existence of two separate poems was never seriously questioned before the publication of C. Osborne's insightful article, which was received with much enthusiasm in modern scholarship, and which now holds a lead in the interpretation of Empedocles.[4] The case which Osborne makes is a plausible one. She argues that we actually know one fixed title (*Katharmoi*) and the more general title *Peri Physeos*, which was uncritically ascribed to nearly every early thinker. In addition, whenever ancient scholars quote from Empedocles, they do not mention the title of the poem, from which they quote. According to Osborne, this suggests that they knew only one poem of Empedocles, since they do not explicitly acknowledge two separate poems of Empedocles. However, this is not exactly true, since

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[2] Cf. Wilamowitz (1935, pp. 626-661); Diels (1898, p. 413); but also Bidez (1894, pp. 159-174). Hussey reasonably objected, however, that there is no independent evidence which compels us to accept such a conversion (1972, p. 69). On the conceptual unity of the two poems, cf. Bignone (1963, p. 122); Verdenius (1948, pp. 10-14); Long (1949, 142-158); Cornford (1952, pp. 121-124); Schwabl (1957, pp. 278-89); Barnes (1967, pp. 18-23); and Zuntz (1971, p. 269). Jaeger thus described Empedocles as a "philosophical centaur" (1946-7, p. 295). For scholarly views on the incompatibility of the two poems, cf. Zeller (1905, pp. 802-837); Adam (1908, p. 253); Dodds (1951, p. 146); Vlastos (1952, pp. 119-123) and again in (1995, p. 4); Long (1966, p. 275); Rohde (1987, pp. 379 and 382 f.); and Jaeger (1967, p. 133).

[3] For a constructive criticism of Diels' and Wilamowitz' interpretation, cf. Kranz (1935, p. 111 ff.); Kahn (1972, p. 5), but also Millerd, who rejects this interpretation because it lacks conclusive evidence (1980, p. 89). She reasonably argues that the different temper which Empedocles displays in his fragments does not necessarily imply a big lapse in the time of the composition of these two poems (p. 89).

[4] Cf. Osborne (1987).

Diogenes Laertius clearly mentions two different poems of Empedocles. In his work he refers once to Empedocles' *Περὶ Φύσεως*, while when he introduces fragment B112 he says: [*Ἐμπεδοκλῆς*] *ἐναρχόμενος τῶν Καθαρμῶν*.[5]

Some scholars have argued that the word *Καθαρμοί* may also refer to a set of purifying techniques, which the ancient scholars mistook for a title. This impression is further reinforced by the fact that Hippolytus obviously confused the two, when he wrote that *τοὺς Ἐμπεδοκλέους λανθάνεις διδάσκων καθαρμοὺς*.[6] This passage from Hippolytus suggests that he is here using *καθαρμοί* as an alternative for *δόγματα*, and that for this reason he does not refer to the title of Empedocles' poem. However, Hippolytus' testimony cannot seriously undermine the case that *Καθαρμοί* was a poem composed by Empedocles, since it is only natural for a title of a work to reflect its actual content. In addition, Simplicius refers to the first and to the second book of *Περὶ Φύσεως*.[7] His mention of the particular title of the poem, from which he is quoting, is perhaps implying his attempt to be precise on his sources. If he knew of only one poem of Empedocles, then this distinction would be pleonastic, yet, of course, possible.

Osborne reasonably points out that the title *Καθαρμοί* is more original and, consequently, a more plausible title than the standard and generally unreliable title *Περὶ Φύσεως*. In her view, moreover, this observation validates the single-work hypothesis, which she proposes. However, the originality of the title does not necessarily rule out completely the possibility that Empedocles composed two poems, and it cannot offer conclusive

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[5] Cf. VIII.60 and 62. We may also add here Aristotle's testimony, who refers to Empedocles' *Τὰ Φυσικά*. It goes without saying, of course, that Aristotle may perhaps refer to the cosmology of Empedocles and not to a particular poem (*Meteor.* 381b31). And Theon, although he is a minor authority, makes an explicit mention of Empedocles' *Καθαρμοί* (*de utilit. mathim.*, 104.1).

[6] Cf. Hippol. *Ref. Haer.* VII.29.

[7] Cf. Simpl. *Phys.* 157.25; and 381.29 respectively. Cf. also, Plut. *Adv. Colot.* 111F; Aet. I 30.1: *γράφει δὲ οὕτως ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν Φυσικῶν*.

evidence for the number of Empedocles' works, even less so when taken alone. If we accept *Καθαρμοί* as a valid title for Empedocles' *one* poem, then his discussion of cosmology in a work which has this title becomes problematic. For instance, how is it possible to fit fragment B17, in which Empedocles exposes his cosmological doctrine, into a work which has the title *Καθαρμοί*? This title makes more sense, however, if we accept it as a title for Empedocles' second poem, the content of which it more successfully describes.

S. Trépanier has suggested that these two titles perhaps refer to different thematic sections of Empedocles' poem.[8] If we accept Trépanier's view, then we do not completely discard the ancient testimonies, while at the same time the single-work hypothesis remains intact. J. Mansfeld has reasonably objected, however, that alternative titles of the same work were normally distinguished with *ἤ* and not with *καί*, as in the case of Empedocles' poems. According to Mansfeld, if this was really the case with Empedocles, then all references made to his poem would take the form *Καθαρμοὶ ἤ Περὶ Φύσεως* (in which case the first title is the specialised and the second the more general) but not *Καθαρμοί καὶ Περὶ Φύσεως*, as our sources clearly say.[9]

Trépanier also proposes in his analysis the long title *Καθαρμοί καὶ Περὶ Φύσεως* for Empedocles' poem, as in the case of Hesiod's *Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι*.[10] However, this view is not safe, mainly because in Hesiod's work the two words, which are separated by the *καί*, obviously refer to two different aspects of the same thematic whole. If this was the case with Empedocles, then we would have at least one standard title (*Peri Physeos*) and an alternative title (*Katharmoi*), which singles out a specific part of the poem,

[8] Cf. Trépanier (2003, p. 29). He further adds in his analysis that in this case these two titles functioned as terms which indicated a specific section of Empedocles' poem.
[9] Cf. Mansfeld (2005, p. 343).
[10] Cf. Trépanier, *ibid*.

while in fact there is no obvious reason for this.[11] It then becomes apparent that we are here dealing with the titles of two different works and not with alternative titles of the same work.

In addition, according to Osborne's interpretation, we should trust the testimony of Plutarch, who, when he quotes fragment B115, says that *ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς φιλοσοφίας προαναφωνήσας*.[12] If we trust Plutarch's words, then we also have to place fragment B115 in the beginning of Empedocles' poem and, consequently, at the heart of his cosmology.[13] In this way, however, we are bound to view Empedocles' cosmology as a religious construct and Empedocles himself as a religious teacher. It is for this reason important to address the issue, whether Empedocles was primarily concerned with religious matters in his account or whether he was mainly interested in cosmological investigation. This is not by all means an easy question, since the surviving fragments clearly show that both aspects were considered equally important by Empedocles.

It is important to clarify, however, the meaning which *φιλοσοφία* has for Plutarch, before taking his testimony about Empedocles' poem at its face value. Trépanier followed van der Ben and identified it with the "physical lore".[14] It is difficult, however, to lend our support to the view that the meaning which *φιλοσοφία* has for Plutarch coincides with our modern understanding of the term, even less so with Empedocles', if of course he was

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[11] Mansfeld objected that this cannot qualify as a long title for a poem, because these words are names (2005, p. 343).

[12] Cf. Plutarch. *De exil.* 607C. Cf. also, Osborne, *ibid.*, followed by Inwood in undermining the reliability of Diogenes Laertius' testimony in favour of Plutarch (2001, p. 14).

[13] Van der Ben's view anticipates Osborne's take on the same issue. However, Van der Ben places B115 in the beginning of Empedocles' cosmological poem (1975, p. 25). It does seem unlikely that B115, which presents to the audience the doctrine of the *δαίμων* would have been discussed prior to Empedocles' cosmology, since it presupposes his cosmological doctrine. Osborne was later followed by Trépanier (2003, p. 45), and Inwood (2001, p. 18).

[14] Cf. Trépanier (2003, p. 12), and van der Ben (1975, p. 13).

aware of such a discipline. In a similar vein, Mansfeld objected to the reliability of Plutarch's testimony, on grounds that *φιλοσοφία* has for Plutarch a strong moral sense, which would be unwise to impose on Empedocles' thought.[15]

Modern scholars, who place fragment B115 in the beginning of Empedocles' poem, do so in order to defend the unity of his thought. In their view, this seems to be the only plausible way in which the apparent inconsistency of that Empedocles composed two quite different poems can be put to rights.[16] Trépanier, for example, maintained that it is actually more important to establish a unity in Empedocles' thought than it is to answer the question about the actual title or number of Empedocles' poems.[17] However, the unity of Empedocles' thought can survive otherwise and it is not compelling to assume a necessary relationship between the unity of his thought and the existence of a single poem.

If our mind reads a conflict between religion and cosmology, and for this reason it finds it hard to perceive of a cosmological religion or of a religious cosmology, then Empedocles is not to blame. As P. Kingsley put it, "the contradiction is in ourselves, not in Empedocles".[18] It is only natural to expect different works which were composed by the same author to conspicuously share some common features, at least in some crucial respects. In other words, the unity of Empedocles' thought can only account for that he was not (perhaps) a schizophrenic, but it cannot be safely used, especially when taken alone, as evidence that he composed a single poem.

The modern mind naturally finds it hard to accept a unity between

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15 Cf. Mansfeld (2005, p. 344).

16 According to Trépanier the majority of Empedocles' fragments, excluding B115, form a consistent whole (2003, p. 11). McKirahan points out that the single-work hypothesis reconciles the contradiction between Empedocles' "scientific thought" and his religious ideas (1994, p. 257). See also, Inwood (2001, p. 18).

17 Cf. Trépanier (2003, p. 29).

18 Cf. Kingsley (1995, p. 231).

cosmology and religious thought, such as the one manifested in Empedocles' fragments, and for this reason it frequently regards it as a problem, which has to be resolved. The number of the works written by an author, however, plays no significant role when it comes to deciding about the nature of his authority claims. Regardless of whether Empedocles composed only one poem, in which he intentionally blended religious reflection with cosmology, or of whether he composed two poems, one for his cosmology and one for his religious insights, the truth still remains that these two aspects of his thought are inseparable and that they provide information about the conceptual scheme of Empedocles' doctrines. It is not therefore surprising nor should it cause bafflement, that in the verses of Empedocles we come across such an ambivalent characteristic. At any event, the fragments of Empedocles provide two clues, which contradict the single-work hypothesis, to the examination of which we shall now turn.

To begin with, M.R. Wright in her response to Osborne pointed out that in fragment B6 Empedocles says *ῥιζώματα πρῶτον ἄκουε*. According to her analysis, *πρῶτον* here indicates the beginning of a *new* exposition, which Empedocles explicitly associates with the *ῥιζώματα*, i.e. with his cosmological doctrine.[19] It is possible to add to Wright's observation that fragment B112 also has an introductory tone, but it addresses completely different matters from fragment B6. The existence of two different introductory fragments in Empedocles, which nonetheless discuss a different topic, make it hard to accept that they both belong to the beginning of the same poem.

Secondly, in the surviving fragments of Empedocles we have a direct mention of at least two different addressees. In fragment B1 Empedocles

[19] Cf. Wright (2006, p. 209). On the introductory tone of B6, see also Mansfeld (1995, p. 227). Mansfeld used this in his analysis as evidence for that the first cosmologists employed in their works "intentional obscurity", with which they created an atmosphere of suspension to their audience.

explicitly refers by name to his student Pausanias, while in fragment B112 he addresses his fellow-citizens of Acragas. In addition, it is possible to discern a shift in the nature of the voice of authority which Empedocles uses. In the fragments which are normally allocated in the *Peri Physeos* he generally adopts a didactic posture, especially when he patiently repeats his message to his student till he finally grasps it. In the fragments which perhaps belong to the *Katharmoi*, however, he speaks with an agonising cry about the unrighteous and terribly wrong behaviour which men display in religious matters.[20] In the fragments in which Empedocles expounds his cosmology, moreover, he resorts to the instructing voice of Hesiod, but when he discusses questions of faith and morality his voice becomes firm and somewhat more enthusiastic and arresting. This change in Empedocles' tone of voice is far too conspicuous to be disregarded.

It then becomes apparent that Empedocles adopts two different modes of self-presentation in his fragments, one of which is more or less traditional, while the other introduces an area of concern which was never before pursued with such perseverance. Although Xenophanes also phrased concerns about religious matters, Empedocles is nonetheless the first thinker under examination for whom religious teaching is a complementary aspect of cosmology. At the same time, however, in order for one to understand either which poem, he does not have to know the other. Empedocles' belief, for example, that it is wrong to consume meat is based on his cosmology, but it is not required that one knows his cosmology in detail in order to understand this view. Empedocles' poems are not wholly unintelligent, that is, when read independently from one another.

It seems that Empedocles is very clear about the purpose of his teaching. He tells Pausanias not only to "pay heed", to "know", like Hesiod

[20] Cf. frs. B124, B136, B137, and B141.

tells Perses, but also to "enhance his understanding", to "*reflect* upon the evidence which he provides", and to "inspect his account with studious care". When Empedocles appeals with his account to the intelligence of his audience, he does not introduce an element which is wholly new, since Hesiod speaks to Perses in a similar fashion.[21] In other words, Empedocles' statement that his audience will benefit from his truth is to some extent traditional, especially for an individual who wishes to take up the role of the instructor in his presentation. The fact, however, that Empedocles wants Pausanias to think critically and to apprehend the cosmic reality suggests that Empedocles is actually appropriating the traditional voice of authority of the *διδάσκαλος* to new cosmological ends.

It cannot be a matter of mere coincidence that such addresses are present only in the poem which deals with the question of the origin and constitution of the cosmos. This in turn implies that Empedocles considered cosmology a theoretical activity, which required intelligence and rationality. This is also indicated by that whenever Empedocles refers to the persuasive value of his cosmological account, he claims that it affects the *φρήν* or the *πραπίδες* of Pausanias. In the *Katharmoi* on the other hand Empedocles associates ignorance with personal misery. It is for this reason, moreover, that he refers to those who disregard his truth as *δειλοί*, i.e. wretched mortals.[22] If our view that the cosmology of Empedocles is closely related with his moral teaching is correct, then in him we encounter for the first time cosmology as an *ars vivendi*, namely as a personal orientation in life.

In addition, in fragment B110, which was perhaps at the end of

[21] Cf., for example, its explicit expression in *Op.* 218: *παθὼν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω*.

[22] Cf. B124: *ὢ δειλὸν θνητῶν γένος, ὢ δυσάνολβον, τοίων ἔκ τ'ἐρίδων ἔκ τε στοναχῶν ἐγένεσθε*, B132: *ὄλβιος, ὅς θείων πραπίδων ἐκτήσατο πλοῦτον,/ δειλὸς δ', ὠι σκοτόεσσα θεῶν πέρι δόξα μέμηλεν*, but also B141. In his cosmological poem, however, Empedocles uses the epithet *νήπιος*, cf. B11. In the *Καθαρμοί* it is used once of the mindless attitude of *σφάζειν ἐπευχόμενος*, in which case, according to Empedocles, the father slaughters without realising it his own son (cf. B137).

Empedocles' cosmological poem, the status of ignorance goes hand in hand with personal misery. Empedocles says that in case Pausanias prefers to investigate questions other than those with which Empedocles is concerned, then *μυρία δειλὰ πέλονται, ἅ τ' ἀμβλύνουσι μερίμνας*. It then becomes apparent that already in the cosmological poem Empedocles is beginning to pave the way for his *Katharmoi*, since it is in the latter that the belief that ignorance brings about personal misery is discussed in detail. In the *Katharmoi*, that is, knowledge is repeatedly associated with the good lot which follows one's right choice of appropriate behaviour.

The fragments from the *Katharmoi* are less argumentative and less expository than his cosmological fragments. Empedocles deals with the question of human morality as a set of codes, with which one has to comply, provided of course that he wishes to lead a happy life. Empedocles is also very specific about the moral guidelines which he gives to his audience. When he discusses moral questions his tone is straightforward and dismissive, but also sincere, personal, and drenched in spiritual agony. Yet he identifies correct moral behaviour with a specific kind of *scientia*, as his reference to the example of the wise man in fragment B129 further indicates.[23] For this reason his moral views and his cosmological doctrine formed an inseparable unity of his thought, which he nonetheless presented in two different poems.

2. Pythagorean secrecy in Empedocles

The two poems of Empedocles display a striking difference. The cosmological poem has only one addressee and it occasionally applies a tone

[23] There is no compelling reason to identify the *σόφος* mentioned in this fragment with Pythagoras, since Empedocles obviously makes a general statement. If we accept that Empedocles refers to Pythagoras here, then in this way we recycle Plutarch's view, who quotes this fragment in his *Vita Pythagorea*. The title of this work clearly suggests why Plutarch found it appropriate to take Empedocles to refer to Pythagoras in B129.

of secrecy in the exposition. The religious *Katharmoi* on the other hand,[24] which one would expect to be veiled in secrecy because of its religious topic, is, as W.K. Guthrie put it, "almost shouted from the rooftops".[25] It is important to examine the element of secrecy which Empedocles often uses in his poems, because it has been sometimes interpreted as evidence that he laid in his account a claim to the authority of the mystic.

Modern scholars generally accept the influence which Pythagoreanism and Orphism had on Empedocles' thought, and the evidence from his surviving fragments further encourage this impression. These mystical cults were active in the area of *Magna Graecia*, and for this reason it is very likely that Empedocles of Agrigentum had *some* knowledge of the general content of their teaching.[26] However, it is impossible that he knew their doctrines in detail, since one of the basic characteristics of mysticism is to keep the truth of the sect in secrecy and away from public view.

The basic principles of a mystical sect were withheld from the public and they were presented only within the circle of the sect itself. This was not a superficial characteristic, because it defined the very essence of being a *μύστης*. This is also why hardly any direct evidence for the knowledge which was presented in these cults has survived. It seems that the rule of secrecy was applied consistently by the members of the cult and it closed all doors to

[24] The word *Καθαρμοί* generally refers to a set of rituals which remove moral defilement. Cf. Aesch. *Ch.* 966-8 (*καθαρμοῖσιν ἀτᾶν ἐλατηρίοις*); *Eum.* 276-8; Soph. *OT* 99-101, and 1227-30.

[25]Cf. Guthrie (1965, p. 137). Guthrie maintained that in the Pythagoric tradition the mathematical finding were more jealously kept secret than other doctrines such as that of transmigration. In his view, this might also have been the case with Empedocles. However, nothing from the Pythagorean dogmas survives in direct quotation, while in the case of Empedocles we have direct quotations from both his cosmological as well as from his religious poem.

[26] For Acragas as the house of eschatological doctrines (*Φερσέφονας ἕδος*), cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 12.

the public.[27] This knowledge was disclosed only to the selective members of the cult. Empedocles on the other hand never attempts to keep his cosmology or his moral views away from the public. Quite on the contrary, in fragment B112 he describes the way with which he was received by a crowd of people, who gathered everywhere he went in order to hear a word of wisdom from his mouth.

> τοῖσιν †ἅμ'† ἀνΐκωμαιἐςἄστεατηλεθάοντα,
> ἀνδράσινἠδὲγυναιξί, σεβίζομαι·οἵδ' ἅμ' ἕπονται
> μυρίοιἐξερέοντες, …

It seems difficult to accept that these words come from an individual, who was fully devoted to mysticism, since it is highly unlikely that a teacher from an Orphic or Pythagorean sect would take such great satisfaction in his popularity. The way in which Empedocles presents himself in fragment B112 shows that his teachings were not only available to the public but that they were also rather popular. Popularity and publicity are two characteristics that certainly do not go hand in hand with the tradition of Pythagoreanism or of Orphism. Their teachings were disseminated through oral presentation and they did not address a large audience of listeners but a small and limited audience of believers.

Trépanier viewed fragment B112 as a public speech, which is nonetheless actually addressed to Pausanias, and through him to every potential follower.[28] According to his interpretation, Empedocles addresses the Acragantines, only because he uses them as an example which the "austere or puritanically minded" listener should avoid.[29] However, in the

[27] According to Diogenes Laertius Empedocles broke with the publication of his poem the rule of Pythagorean secrecy (*Vit.* VIII.55).
[28] There is one reference in the ancient tradition according to which a bard named Cleomenes recited Empedocles' *Καθαρμοί* at the Olympic games, cf. Athaeneus, 620D. For Empedocles as a poet in an oral society, see Hershbell (1968).
[29] Cf. Trépanier (2003, p. 104-5).

fragments normally assigned to the *Katharmoi* Empedocles often refers to mankind in general and not to a specific addressee, while his criticism about impious behaviour is explicitly directed to them.[30] At any event, there is nothing in fragment B112 which suggests that its presentation would cause "righteous anger" to a conservative audience, as Trépanier claims. It seems more natural that Empedocles' prohibition of sacrificing animals would shock such an audience.[31] In addition, it seems highly unlikely that Empedocles' boastful presentation of himself in fragment B112 would successfully appeal to a solemnly conservative mind.

In addition, P. Kingsley and Trépanier maintained that it is possible to read a deliberately enigmatic style in Empedocles' fragments, which guaranteed that not everyone could obtain access to his account. They thus propose a different explanation of the statement which Empedocles makes in fragment B112. They argue that Empedocles *prima facie* addresses a larger audience, while in fact he intimates his knowledge only to those who are capable of understanding it. He does not therefore *really* expect to be followed by the many but only by the chosen few.

However, enigmatic expression does not occur with regularity in Empedocles' fragments and it is not a general characteristic of his style. Had it been so significant for Empedocles in the way in which he wished to make an authority claim, then one would normally expect it to be more native to his language and thought. The example of Heraclitus shows us how an individual would *deliberately* treat human language, if he chose to exploit linguistic ambiguity. Quite on the contrary, Empedocles frequently speaks to his audience in a straightforward manner and he often repeats and explains

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[30] Cf. esp., B124: *ὦ δειλὸν θνητῶν γένος*. For other fragments which address directly a large audience, see B114, B136, and B141.

[31] According to Phaborinus, Empedocles sacrificed an effigy of an ox made *ἐκ μέλιτος καὶ ἀλφίτων*, cf. fr. 3 FHG.

his message. This is a very clear way of presenting truth, which does not conceal knowledge.

At the same time, however, it is possible to trace a spirit of secrecy in the way in which Empedocles communicates his message. In fragment B111 Empedocles tells Pausanias that *μούνωι σοὶ ἐγὼ κρανέω τάδε πάντα*. Kingsley argues that Empedocles with this phrase draws from the tradition of transmitting knowledge from the spiritual "father" to the spiritual "son". In his examination Kingsley adduces parallels from the Greco-Egyptian mysticism and he compares Empedocles' fragment B111 with an excerpt from Sophocles.[32] It is possible to find, however, a less remote parallel for this fragment of Empedocles. Hesiod in his *Opera et dies* discloses in the same way knowledge to an individual, whom he singles out. It is therefore reasonable to view the claim which Empedocles makes in fragment B111 in connection with the epic tradition of instruction rather than with the mystic tradition of secrecy. In this way, moreover, Empedocles may be perhaps underlining his status as a teacher.

In fragment B5, Empedocles advises his student Pausanias to *στεγάσαι* his teachings *φρενὸς ἔλλοπος εἴσω*. Trépanier and Kingsley interpret this fragment in connection with fragment B110, in which Empedocles asks Pausanias to inspect his account with studious care (*καθαρῆσιν ἐποπτεύσης μελέτησιν*). According to their interpretations, *ἐποπτεύσης* of fragment B110 encourages the view that Empedocles refers in fragment B6 to secrecy. This is so, because they view *ἐποπτεύσης* as evidence that Empedocles implies in fragment B110 the three successive stages of mystical initiation, namely *καθαρμός*, *παράδοσις*, and *ἐποπτεία*.[33]

To begin with, if we choose to read in fragment B5 an element of

[32] Cf. *OC* 1522-32 and Kingsley (1995, p. 221), followed by Trépanier (2003, p. 19), who also read in Empedocles a Pythagorean tendency.
[33]Cf. Kingsley (1995, pp. 230-1).

secrecy, then we have to also accept the testimony of Plutarch. When Plutarch quotes this fragment he comments that Empedocles is *τῷ Παυσανίᾳ Πυθαγορικῶς παραινεῖν τὰ δόγματα*.[34] According to Plutarch, moreover, the adjective *ἔλλοπος*, which Empedocles uses elsewhere in order to describe the silence of fish, is a *γέρας ἐχεμυθίας*.[35] However, it is possible to understand this fragment differently. Empedocles' use of "mute" for the description of the way in which he expects Pausanias to receive his teaching can either mean "you should not share with others what I have just told you" *or* it can mean "keep this words in your mind", i.e. "take a while to *consider* the truth of my account". Empedocles, that is, might be perhaps exhorting Pausanias to be "silent" in the sense that he urges him to reflect upon the account which Empedocles has just presented to him.

In addition, it is not compelling to construe *στεγάσαι* as "to completely exclude from the public view", as the interpretations of Kingsley and Trépanier accept, since it may also mean "to protect" or "to harbour". The Greek word, for example, for "roof" is *στέγη* and for "cover" is *στέγασμα*. These words do not so much evoke the sense of "to keep away from" but of "to protect". In fact, when Empedocles wants to express the sense of "to hide" he uses the compound form *ἀποστεγάζειν* and not *στεγάζειν*.[36] This reading of fragment B5 is further encouraged, furthermore, by that Empedocles refers to *φρήν*, which clearly implies intelligence.[37] It therefore seems safe to accept that Empedocles has in mind in fragment B6 not the last stage of mystical initiation, as Kingsley and Trépanier have proposed, but the last stage of

[34] Cf. Plut.*Symp.Probl.* 728E.
[35] Cf. Suda, *sub voc*; and B117.4.
[36]Cf. B42, in which Empedocles says that the light of the Sun is concealed (*ἀπεστέγασεν*) by the light of the Moon. The adjective *στεγανός*, furthermore, is associated with the idea of firmness and stability, and as such it is a synonym for *ἔμπεδος*, cf., e.g., Alcm. fr. 148.11:*στεγανόποδας*.
[37]Cf., B17.23 (*φρένας ἀΰξει*); B23.11 (*μή σ' ἀπάτη φρένα καινύτω*); B114.4 (*δύσζηλος ἐπὶ φρένα πίστιος ὁρμή*), and B133.5 (*πειθοῦς ἁμαξιτός εἰς φρένα πίπτει*).

instruction, during which the teacher asks his student to reflect upon the newly acquired knowledge.

As noted already, Trépanier and Kingsley argue in their analyses that the phrase *καθαρῇσιν ἐποπτεύσης μελέτησιν* in fragment B110 implies the stages of Orphic-Pythagorean initiation.[38] It is unwise to completely disregard the mystical touch which knowledge has for Empedocles in this fragment. It seems that for him the acquisition of knowledge was a profound and pious undertaking in its own right. At the same time, however, it is difficult to also accept that this aspect of his thought constituted the core of his authority claims and that it defined the very nature of his expertise.

The verb *ἐποπτεύω* can refer to the last stage of mystic initiation, at which the initiate is spiritually transformed by the mystical knowledge and doctrines, which he has learned in the cult. However, it does not refer exclusively to this. It is also attested with the sense "to overlook",[39] whence it also acquired the sense "to supervise" and "to protect".[40] The adjective *καθαρός* obviously has strong religious associations. It is possible, however, to understand *καθαρός* in a different way. Empedocles may be using it here in the sense of "clear mind", i.e. a mind which is free of preoccupations. In this way he asks his audience to grasp the truth of his account free of their personal convictions and free of the widely accepted views which they

[38] Cf. Trépanier (2003, p. 19).

[39] Cf., e.g., Hom. π140; Hes. *Op.* 76; Aesch. *Ag.* 1579 (*θεοὺς ἄνωθεν γῆς ἐποπτεύειν ἄχη*); *Ch.*1 (*ἐποπτεύων κράτη*); *Ch.* 489 (*ἐποπτεῦσαι μάχην*). Cf. also its metaphorical use of "I am in ec-stasis" in Arist. *Ran.* 745-6.

[40] In this case it is generally used of a god: cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 1269-71 (*Ἀπόλλων…ἐποπτεύσας ἐμέ*); Eum. 224 (*Παλλὰς τῶνδ' ἐποπτεύσει θεά*); *Ch.* 1063-4 (*εὐτυχοίης, καὶ σ' ἐποπτεύων πρόφρων θεὸς φυλάσσοι καιρίοισι συμφοραῖς*). See also, Pl. *Leg.*951d (*τῶν περὶνόμους ἐποπτευόντων*). It is also used of the Sun, who "overlooks" *and* "supervises" (*ἐποπτεύων)* human actions: Aesch. Ch. 985, and Pind. *Ol.*8.11; Aesch. *Ch.* 584; and Bacchyl. *Ep.* 1.3.

consider true although they are mistaken.[41] Empedocles uses the adjective *καθαρός* again in fragment B3, which opens the exposition of his cosmology. From what follows in this fragment it is possible to construe *καθαρός* as "clear from misconception".

If this suggestion is safe, then Empedocles does not make in fragment B110 a statement which is wholly unfamiliar in early cosmologies. These words strikingly bring to mind, for example, the declaration of Parmenides' goddess, according to which he should *κρῖναι δὲ λόγῳ πολύδηριν ἔλεγχον*.[42] In addition, the meaning of *ἐποπτεύσης*, becomes more clear, if we view it in connection with *μελέτῃσιν*, which evidently implies an intellectual activity.

It then seems reasonable to accept that in fragment B110 Empedocles asks Pausanias to "reflect upon my words with unbiased study".[43] In this

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[41]It seems that Empedocles considered the interest in knowledge not only a matter of personal curiosity but also a moral obligation as well. This is manifested in that for him, the one who knows is *ὄλβιος*, while someone who does not is *δειλός*. Cf., esp., B 132: *ὄλβιος ὅς πραπίδων νέκτήσατο πλοῦτον, /δειλὸς δ', ᾧ σκοτόεσσα θεῶν πέριδόξα μέμηλεν*.

[42]Cf. B7.5. Parmenides asks his audience with this phrase to judge critically the account which the goddess, i.e. himself, discloses.

[43] The noun *μελέτη* is etymologically related with the verb *μέλομαι*, and as such it primarily carries the sense "to take care of". Cf., e.g., *In Merc.*556-7; Hes. *Op*. 316, 380, 457; Sophocles' adjective *μελέτωρ* (guardian) in *El.* 846, and Pindar's *ὀξείᾳ μελέτᾳ* in *Ol.* 6.37. It thus gradually acquired the sense of "personal business" with a particular stress upon the element of action. Cf., e.g., Hes. *Op.* 412, 443; Theogn. *El.* 1.924; Anacr.fr.11b4-5; Eur. *Med.* 1099-1102, and *Hippol.* 224. Archilochus uses *μελέτη* in order to denote not only the things for which men care, but also those things to which they dedicate their effort: *πάντα πόνος τεύχει θνητοῖς μελέτη τε βροτείη* (fr. 17). Cf. also, Aesch.*Pers.*936. A more technical use of the word is attested in the Hippocratic corpus, in which treatises it is used with the sense "to examine", "to observe" in order to reach a conclusion (hence, it implies a critical activity). Cf., e.g., *De diaet*.2.18 (of the *νουσήματα* which are *μελετητέα*); *De fract.* 11.25 (*χρηστῇ μελέτῃ θεραπευθῇ*); *De arte*, 7.5 (*τῶν τὴν ἰητρικὴν μελησάντων*); *De affect. inter*.11.9; and *De dec. habit*.8.1 (*μελετᾷν δὲ χρὴ ἐν ἰητρικῇ ταῦτα μετὰ πάσης καταστολῆς*). Yet the word occasionally retained its primary sense "to take care of", say of a wound,: cf., e.g., *Vect*.36.11 *(μελέτη, ἴησις, ἐπίδεσις, ὡς νόμος*); *De fract*.7.24, but also Eur. *Bacch.* 892. Interestingly enough, *μελέτη* also occurs twice in Pindar in connection with his expertise. Cf. *Ol*.9.107-8 (*μία δ' οὐχ ἅπαντας ἄμμε θρέψει μελέτα*), and *Nem.* 6.53-4

way, furthermore, he repeats the advice which gives to Pausanias in fragment B5. Fragments B110 and B5 both describe the way in which Empedocles expected his audience to receive his account. It should be noted, however, that this suggestion does not seek to belittle the importance of the Orphic-Pythagorean influence on Empedocles. Quite on the contrary, it helps us view it in new light. Perhaps Empedocles appropriates mystical vocabulary in order to imply his desire to address a somewhat more specialised audience. At the same time, however, he does not wish to exclude anyone in specific from his truth, in which respect he differs from mysticism, since mystical initiation presupposed an element of selectiveness.

It therefore becomes apparent that in the cosmological poem of Empedocles, Pausanias is a special individual, whom Empedocles chooses as his student. It is not safe, however, to assume from this that Empedocles takes up the role of the mystic, since the way in which he discloses his cosmology to Pausanias is closer to the way in which Hesiod speaks to Perses in his didactic epos. Empedocles thus adopts the didactic posture of Hesiod in the presentation of his doctrines.[44] In addition, the purpose of the religious tone of fragment B110 is not to establish a link with mysticism but to prepare the ground for a follow-up, namely the *Katharmoi*. It is not therefore safe to reverse the order of the poems, as Kingsley and Trépanier maintain in their examinations. They claim that *Katharmoi* was followed by the *Peri Physeos*, because in the ritual of mystical initiation the stage of the initiate's purification was followed by the *ἐποπτεία*. This interpretation is not promising, mainly because, as noted above, fragment B6 places the doctrine of the *ῥιζώματα* in the beginning of Empedocles' exposition, but also because

(*ἕπομαι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἔχων μελέταν*). Empedocles pairs in B131 *μελέτη*with *φροντίς*, i.e. "care", which in turn suggests that he did not treat these two nouns as synonyms.

[44] For an insightful examination of the similarities between Hesiod and Empedocles, especially in terms of language, see Hershbell (1970b).

some theories presented in the *Katharmoi* (such as the *daimon* dogma) require that one knows the theory of the *ῥιζώματα*, which was examined in the cosmological poem.

3. Empedocles as a poet

Scholars have frequently observed that Empedocles is an obviously charismatic poet. He has been often viewed as a true poet, for whom the task of expressing a cosmology in hexameter verse came naturally and easily. Cicero, for example, was the first to observe that there is no conflict between Empedocles' skilful verses and his shrewd cosmological doctrine. In his view, Empedocles is proficient in both of these different domains of expertise.[45] There is indeed much truth in this, since it does seem that the medium of verse is not for Empedocles a mere verbal technique which is wholly alien to his genius.[46]The verses of Empedocles stand out not only because of their

[45] Cf. Cic. *De orat.* I.50.217. Cicero adduces the example of citizen Mucius, who was equally skilful in playing two different games.

[46] For Empedocles as a poet in ancient tradition, cf. Diog. Laert. *Vit.* VIII.51; Horac. *Ars Poet.* 463; Quint. *Inst. Or.* I4.4; and, of course, Lucretius' praise of Empedocles in *De rerum nat.* I.729-733. See also Lactanius' confusion about whether Empedocles should be classified as a poet or as a philosopher (*Instit. divin.* II 12.4). Aristotle found it difficult to accept the choice of verse for a "philosophical" work. He thus thought that Empedocles wished to speak in this way in an ambiguous manner, as in the case of oracles. Cf. Arist. *Rhet*. 1407a, and *Meteor*. 357a. For Empedocles as a poet in modern scholarship, cf. Barnes (1932, p. 71), Guthrie (1965, p. 135), Barnes (1982, p. 537), Dodds (1951, p. 174, n.115), Wright (1997, p. 2), Millerd (1980, p. 21), Leonard (1908, p. 9), Osborne (1997, p. 25), and Zuntz (1971, p. 185). Bignone viewed Empedocles as a "poeta immaginoso e filosofo sottile" (1963, p. 4), while Bollack commented that "la mémoire d'Homère accompagne Empédocle dès les premiers accords du poème" (1965, vol. I, p. 277). Hussey, on the other hand maintained that the style of Empedocles bears little resemblance to Homer or Hesiod. In his view this guaranteed the originality of his poetry (1972, p. 70). For McKirahan, furthermore, Empedocles' choice of verse was dictated by his religious message, which he understood as an exhortation to personal moral and spiritual salvation (1994, p. 256). McKirahan bases his case upon the assumption that there was only one poem, which

originality, but also because of their aesthetic value, which the stiff verses of Parmenides fail to reach. Empedocles was a master of his own medium, and it is partly because of this that his expertise as a cosmologist is at stake. It is therefore in the interest of this analysis to investigate the way in which Empedocles uses his poetic medium and to examine whether his authority claims imply the expertise of the poet.

The basis of Empedocles' language is epic expression, which he refined however in several aspects. He used the traditional hexameter, for which there was not yet an alternative medium of expression, which could imply to the audience a claim to a higher status of expert knowledge.[47] The epic characteristics in Empedocles range from slightly tedious, though purposeful, repetitions to explanatory similes and direct addresses. However, Empedocles appropriated the function of these epic elements of style to his personal purposes.[48]

In his early study W.E. Leonard read in Empedocles the poet's instinct for the efficient phrase, which is evocative in a variety of ways, while it still retains brevity of expression, an "austere simplicity". [49] It is not exactly clear, however, whether this characteristic results from Empedocles' temperament or whether it is the natural outcome of the limitation which the poetic metre imposed on his expression. At any event, the taste of Empedocles for the

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was focused upon the doctrine of the *δαίμων*. In the previous section it has been argued, however, that the theory of a single poem cannot stand.

[47] As Adam put it, the style of Homer and Hesiod was the "chief orthodoxy" for the Greeks (1908, p. 9).

[48] For a useful examination of the epic background of Empedocles' language and for a comparison of his style with specific examples from epic poetry, see Wright (1997, pp. 11-15). For a general examination of the stylistic similarities between Empedocles and Hesiod in specific, see Hershbell (1970b, pp. 145-161). Hershbell maintains in his examination that Hesiod also influenced the conceptual scheme of Empedocles' cosmology. Wright and Hershbell argue that Empedocles subverts the traditional use of epic phraseology in order to convey his new message. Cf. esp. Hershbell (p. 149 ff.).

[49] Cf. Leonard (1908, p. 12).

imaginative treatment of words and for figures of speech, his use of names of the epic gods as terms for the *ῥιζώματα*, suggest that his poems were delivered orally. This is so because such elements of style are more functional for an audience of listeners while they have little appeal to an audience of readers. It is perhaps for this reason, moreover, that ancient tradition occasionally viewed Empedocles as the inventor of the art of rhetoric.[50]

Scholarly opinion is divided about the specific function of regular repetitions in Empedocles. Guthrie interpreted this characteristic as an effective way, with which Empedocles managed to hold together the unity of his poem's content.[51] J. P. Hershbell objected, however, that repetitions in Empedocles do not always underline the unity of his thought. [52] In a similar vein, M.R. Wright added that repetitions in epic poetry generally occur as summaries or reinforcements of a certain idea in critical parts of the poem.[53] Hershbell claimed in his analysis that the poetic language of Empedocles could perhaps imply the authority claim of the oral epic poets.[54] Hershbell interpreted the repetitions, the frequent direct addresses, and the lack of "clarity and consistency" in Empedocles as evidence that he is composing his poem "from memory". In his view the metrical regularity and the recurrence of some phrases in Empedocles' poem resemble the formulaic diction of oral epic poetry. The advantage of Hershbell's proposal is that it successfully places the poetry of Empedocles into an appropriate social context of oral compositions.

However, Empedocles makes a direct address whenever he wishes to attract the attention of his audience and especially when he presents a novel

[50] Cf. Suda, *sub* Ζήνων; and *Schol. ad Iamblich.* Ad Vit. Pyth. 198.
[51] Cf. Guthrie (1965, p. 155).
[52] Cf. Hershbell (1968, p. 354). For a list of repetitions in Empedocles, cf. pp. 355-7.
[53] Cf. Wright (1981, p. 184, *ad* B25).
[54] Cf. Hershbell (1968, p. 357). In the same spirit, Zuntz remarks that Empedocles is the disciple of the ancient *vates* (1971, p. 268).

cosmological idea.[55] This in turn implies the immediacy of the circumstance of communication, since Empedocles likely read his poem in front of an audience. It suggests, that is to say, the oral aspect of publication but not of composition. It is not exactly clear, furthermore, why we should read in Empedocles a lack of clarity and coherence, especially when considering the fact that his surviving fragments do not offer a complete view of his poetry.

Empedocles frequently says that he will return to his point of departure in his exposition, and in his fragments he often repeats an idea which he has already presented. However, it would be unwise to view this characteristic as a deficient way of presentation. It seems safer to interpret this feature of his thought in light of the didactic standpoint which he adopts in his poems. It is therefore an alternative way of putting across new ideas and of instructing an audience, since the same cosmological theory can be presented, and in some cases argued for, in a variety of ways, so that the audience finally grasps it. The epic poet on the other hand never returns to an episode which he has already presented, although his formulaic style is, of course, characterised by repetitive patterns either of utterance or of imagery.[56]

It then appears that Empedocles was conscious of the technique he employed in the publication of his cosmological material, as Hershbell has observed in his examination.[57] It is important to distinguish, however, whether these oral techniques imply the expertise of the poet or whether Empedocles employs them as a vehicle for his cosmology. It is in other words crucial to examine whether repetition is for Empedocles a technique of composition, as it is for the poets, or of presentation.

Empedocles actually declares three times in his fragments that he will

[55] Cf. frs.B6, B8.1, B17.1, 14. 26-7.
[56] The phrase *οἴμας παντοίας* of epic song (θ 481 and χ 347) refers to the diversity of the stories which a poet can narrate as well as to the plurality of his material. But the poet never argues in alternative ways.
[57] Cf. Hershbell (1968, p. 355).

later return to the point which he makes, in which cases he states as the purpose of his repetition the fact that he wants his audience to understand his message.

B24: κορυφὰς ἑτέρας ἑτέρῃσι προσάπτων
μύθων μὴ τελέειν ἀτραπὸν μίαν
B25: καὶ δίς γὰρ, ὅδεῖ, καλόν ἐστιν ἐνισπεῖν
B35: αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ παλίνορσος ἐλεύσομαι ἐς πόρον ὕμνων,
τὸν πρότερον κατάλεξα, λόγου λόγον ἐξοχετεύων

This set of fragments shows that Empedocles considered himself able to defend his cosmological doctrines in alternative ways. It is noteworthy that in these lines Empedocles associates his message with the intelligence of his audience.[58] This in turn suggests that he viewed cosmology as a theoretical activity. Fragment B17, furthermore, is an even better example of the way in which Empedocles used repetition to didactic ends for the publication of his cosmology. In lines 1 and 16 Empedocles says that "*δίπλ' ἐρέω*", and from what follows it is clear to see that he really does so, since he repeats his view about the way in which the cosmos is formulated and destructed. In the first case many different constituents are united by the power of *Φιλία* thus forming a whole, while in the second case this whole falls apart into its different constituents with the power of *Νεῖκος*. This in turn implies that repetition serves in Empedocles a distinctively didactic purpose and that it did not assist him in composing his poems on the spot, as Hershbell's examination suggests.

Scholars have frequently observed that verse generally contributes to the memorability of a certain poem.[59] It is vital to distinguish, however, that

[58] In B114 Empedocles explicitly says that the *πίστις* occurs in man's *φρένα*. On the physical organ of *φρένες*, cf. Onians (1954, p. 38).

[59] For the view that the medium of verse makes the ideas more easy to remember, cf. Verdenius (1942, p. 2), and Cornford (1952, pp. 120-1), and (1957, pp. 255-6) *contra* Mourelatos (2008, pp. 45-6). Wright observed that repetitions function as reminders and reinforcements (1981, *ad* B25). Guthrie on the other hand observed that

the memorability of verse can have two different functions. It can either facilitate the memory of the audience or it can facilitate the poet in his composition.[60] In the latter case the rhythmic structure of metre, but also the traditional stock of formulae which he has at his disposal, challenge and aid the oral poet in his composition. In the first case, however, verse is deprived of such a technical function, while it still retains the feature of memorability. However, this is the result of the rhythmic structure of metre and not of the skilful way in which the individual handles his verbal instrument.

Empedocles resorts to similes in fragment B23, B84, and B100. In fragment B23 he refers to the way in which painters successfully represent various forms in their works by combining different colours. In this simile it is plain to see that the mixture of the basic colours (*φάρμακα*) by the painters corresponds to the way in which the cosmic force of *Φιλία* unites the *ῥιζώματα*. In this way Empedocles explains the multiplicity of visual reality, while he also describes the process through which it is formulated. This *ἐναργὲς παράδειγμα*, in the words of Simplicius, has an apparent explanatory function in Empedocles' account, since it clarifies his basic cosmological principle, the *ῥιζώματα*.[61] This is a function which is not attested in epic similes. It then seems that Empedocles refined epic similes, since he introduced a new function. He used them creatively, that is, in connection with his desire to instruct his audience rather than as an embellishment of expression.

In fragment B84 Empedocles describes the structure of the eye. If we take this fragment at face value, then it seems that Empedocles shares the

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Empedocles refined the traditional function of repetitions in epic poetry (1965, p. 137). Snell suggested that recurrence plays an important role in Empedocles' use of analogies. In his view, the knowledge which Empedocles expounds is not mystic, because his analogies are easily observable by everyone (1953, p. 218).

[60] See Hershbell (1968, p. 353 and p. 355) for repetition as a technique of oral composition.

[61] Cf. Simpl. *Phys.* 159.27.

same interest with the doctors. A second careful reading reveals, however, that Empedocles is primarily concerned in fragment B84 not with the anatomy of the eye but with explaining the way in which men see.[62] This is also manifested in that the two phrases which refer to *λύχνος*, namely the eye, are symmetrically positioned at crucial points in the fragment:

> line 5: φῶς δ' ἔξω διαθρῷσκον, ὅσον ταναώτερον ἦεν
> line 11: πῦρ δ' ἔξω διίεσκον, ὅσον ταναώτερον ἦεν

Empedocles uses repetition in theses lines in order to explain the way in which the light shines through its surrounding obstacles on two different occasions. In this simile he replaces the physical light (*φῶς*) which shines through the air (*ἀνέμων πνεῦμα*) with the "light" in our eye (*πῦρ*) which shines through the protecting veils which encircle it (*ὀθόνηισι*). The repetition of the same phrase in the end of the line, furthermore, helps the audience to associate these two different occasions and to understand in this way Empedocles' theory.

It then becomes apparent that Empedocles uses in this fragment two analogous processes which clarify his theory about vision. One is taken from everyday experience, and for this reason is obvious to everyone, while the other is deducted from this common experience. It seems that Empedocles discussed the structure of the eye in his otherwise cosmological investigation, because he regarded the faculty of vision as a reliable source of information about the constitution of cosmic reality.[63] This topic is therefore important in his examination of the world, because it explains the main way in which one can acquire truthful knowledge about the nature of the cosmos.

In fragment B100 Empedocles examines the process of aspiration (*ὥδε δ' ἀναπνεῖ πάντα καὶ ἐκπνεῖ*), which he describes by drawing an analogy

[62]Cf. Wright (1981), and Trépanier (2003, *ad loc*).
[63] Empedocles' interest in human understanding is also manifested in his description of the like-perceives-like principle, which he presents in B109.

with the clepsydra.[64] It appears that Empedocles uses a simile in this fragment in order to illustrate a more complex theory. He uses a domestic item from everyday life, that is, in order to clarify his account about breathing, as in the case of fragment B84. It is in this respect, furthermore, that the clepsydra simile differs considerably from epic similes.

Fragment B100 is structured symmetrically. In lines 1-8 Empedocles immediately presents his theory about respiration and in lines 8-21 he draws an elaborative analogy (which is introduced with *ὥσπερ*, as in the case of epic similes) between the process of aspiration and the way in which the child is playing with the clepsydra. He then concludes in lines 22-25 on the reliability of his theory. The careful design of this fragment suggests that Empedocles is here appropriating the structure of epic similes to his own ends.

It is also important to note that the clepsydra simile does not seem to imply the conduct of a scientific experiment,[65] as some scholars have maintained.[66] Although fragment B100 obviously has a scientific topic and it is based on observation, it seems unlikely that it follows the specific conditions or method of a scientific experiment. It clearly draws an analogy between the process of respiration, which Empedocles proposes, with a picture taken from

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[64] For this reason, it does not prove the existence of void, as implied by Aristotle's criticism (*Phys*. 213a) and accepted by some scholars.

[65] Ancient tradition was, of course, more than happy to consider Empedocles the founder of medicine. Cf. Diog. Laert. *Vit*. VIII.76, Sud. *Sub* Empedocles, and Plin. *NH* XXIX 1.5. This view is rooted in the fact that Empedocles twice in his fragments discusses a medical topic. It is noteworthy, however, that Empedocles does not deal with these questions in the same way in which a doctor would, since he does not take interest in curing a disease. Hershbell has argued that for Empedocles, as for Hesiod, poetry had a therapeutic function. However, although Empedocles makes a mention to *φάρμακα* in B112, he appears to be interested in the supreme power which knowledge brings to the person who knows.

[66] Cf. Burnet (1932, p. 73), Leonard (1908, p. 85), and Cornford (1952, p. 7). See also Furley's extensive objection to this interpretation (1957), but also Lloyd (1979, p. 143), Wright (1997, p. 21), McKirahan (1994, p. 281), Powell (1923) and Booth (1960).
More recent studies of the clepsydra fragment object to its interpretation as the description of a scientific experiment.

the everyday life of his audience. This is perhaps also suggested by the fact that the child is *playing* (*παίζουσα*) with the water-vessel of the clepsydra, which opposes the systematic method with which a scientific experiment is normally carried out.

It then seems that repetitions and similes have in Empedocles a particular function, and that it is more safe to view these features in connection with the purposes of his cosmological investigation and with his authority claims. It has become apparent that recurrences in Empedocles are more than flat repetitions, since they function as reminders for the cosmological message which the audience has to learn. Empedocles uses similes in his account for similar purposes. His similes have an apparent explanatory value, which they acquire mainly from their relevance with everyday experience. It seems, that is, that both repetitions and similes specifically serve in Empedocles a didactic purpose.

4. The Muse of philosophy

The notion of expressing a divinely inspired message in verse was well-rooted in Greek tradition.[67] This is manifested not only in epic poetry, which laid a claim to divine inspiration, but also in the case of the oracular pronouncements, which were normally expressed in hexameter verse. In these cases the knowledge which was communicated was considered the product of a contact with the divine, either Apollo, god of prophecy, or the Muse.

However, it cannot be a matter of mere coincidence that in the cosmological fragments under examination the Muse appears only in those accounts, which were composed in verse and which clearly had a focus on the

[67] For the view that verse was the appropriate medium for divinely revealed knowledge, see von Fritz (1946, p. 14).

investigation of the cosmos, such as that of Parmenides and of Empedocles. It seems that with these accounts divine inspiration lost its purely divine significance and that it was used as a literary technique which stressed the importance and seriousness of the message which the individual cosmologist wished to deliver to his audience.

In addition, the choice of verse went hand in hand with the popularity of verse in Greek culture, which also assisted the publication of the text in an oral society. This in turn suggests that poetic invocation was used in the early cosmological accounts as a literary device, which was a vehicle with which these cosmologies could be more successfully delivered orally. It is for this reason safer to interpret the invocation of the Muse in these early thinkers as the appropriation of a traditional mode of expression, which was nonetheless used to different ends. It hinted at the divine authority of the inspired poets, from which the individual wanted however to differentiate himself and his expertise.

In the extant fragments Empedocles refers three times to the authority of the Muse and twice he does so in conventional language:

B3.3-5: καὶ σὲ, πολυμνήστη λευκώλενε παρθένε Μοῦσα,
ἄντομαι, ὧν θέμις ἐστὶν ἐφημερίοισιν ἀκούειν,
πέμπε παρ' Εὐσεβίης ἐλάουσ' εὐήνιον ἅρμα

B131: εἰ γὰρ ἐφημερίων ἕνεκέν τινος, ἄμβροτε Μοῦσα,
ἡμετέρας μελέτας <ἅδε τοι> διὰ φροντίδος ἐλθεῖν,
εὐχομένῳ νῦν αὖτε παρίστασο, Καλλιόπεια,
ἀμφὶ θεῶν μακάρων ἀγαθὸν λόγον ἐμφαίνοντι.

B4.2: ὡς δὲ παρ' ἡμετέρης κέλεται πιστώματα Μούσης.

It is also worthy of note that Empedocles addresses the Muse only in his cosmological poem and never in his *Katharmoi*, although this poem has an obviously religious topic.[68] At any event, in fragment B3 Empedocles asks for

[68] Except from B131, which should not be allocated however in the *Katharmoi*. Diels positioned this fragment in the *Katharmoi*, perhaps because the plural of *ἡμετέρας*

divine inspiration in standard poetic fashion but in fragments B131 and B4 he hints at non-traditional elements. In fragment B131 he attributes the responsibility of his account not to the Muse, as one would normally expect had his belief in divine inspiration been sincere, but to himself (*λόγον ἐμφαίνοντι*). In this fragment he also describes his account as a *μελέτη*, a word which does not generally belong to the authoritative vocabulary of poetry.[69] In addition, in fragment B4 Empedocles introduces a new concept, when he refers to the *πιστώματα* which the Muse provides. This statement does not exactly agree with what we know about poetic inspiration. In epic poetry the Muses are said to be omniscient but their knowledge is never characterised as "convincing". In fact, the reliability of their knowledge was never doubted, for which reason they did not have to justify or defend their divine point of view.

In fragment B23.11 Empedocles exhorts Pausanias to pay heed to the knowledge which is revealed to him *θεοῦ πάρα*. Some scholars have taken this phrase as evidence that Empedocles considered himself a god.[70] This suggestion is further encouraged by the boastful declarations which Empedocles makes in fragment B112, in which he takes particular pride in the fact that he is received everywhere he goes as *if* he were (*ὥσπερ ἔοικα*) a *θεὸς*

μελέτας implies multiple addressees. However, in B4.2, which clearly belongs to the cosmological poem, Empedocles refers to the *πιστώματα* of *ἡμετέρης Μούσης*, in the same fashion perhaps with which Xenophanes speaks of "his" *ἡμετέρης σοφίης* in B2.

69 Cf. B110, but also the examination in the previous section of the authoritative phraseology which Empedocles employs in this fragment.

70 So according to Bidez (1894, p. 102), Nestle (1906, pp. 545-7), and, more recently, Trépanier (2003, p. 55). Trépanier argued that Empedocles' belief in his own personal divinity does not necessarily contradict his belief in the Muse (p. 145). Bollack on the other hand identified the *θεός* in fragment B23 with Aphrodite or *Φιλότης* (1965, vol. 1, p. 265 n.2, and p. 310). It seems hard to accept, however, that Empedocles held the view that the cosmic power of *Φιλότης*, and not the Muse, would interfere with the form of his speech, as he claims in this fragment.

ἄμβροτος.[71]

Wright has reasonably objected, however, that in fragment B4 Empedocles' language suggests that he is exploiting a traditional motif. According to her interpretation, this shows that Empedocles refers in fragment B112 not to himself but to the Muse.[72] In our analysis of the opening of Parmenides' proem, furthermore, we have examined the similar way in which Parmenides uses the motif of poetic revelation in order to imply the importance of his message. It is remarkable that in both of these cases, the Muse or the goddess do not generally speak in the traditional way with which the gods speak either in poetry or in prophecy. Wright's suggestion is attractive, mainly because Empedocles uses elsewhere traditional language in the same fashion. He uses, for example, the names *Κύπρις* and *Ἀφροδίτη* as alternative names for the cosmic force of *Φιλότης*.[73] This suggests that Empedocles was keen to adopt standard epic phrasing with the purpose of

[71] The reading of this line is controversial and some scholars have taken it as evidence for that Empedocles claims for himself the status of a god. Panagiotou thus and van der Ben interpret the phrase as "*I* look like a god". Cf. (1983) and (1975, p. 23), respectively. See also Bidez (1894, p. 102), Nestle (1966, pp. 545-57), and Zuntz (1971, p. 189), who read this line in connection with the phrase *θεοῦ παρά* in B23. Wright has objected, however, that such a view would amount to the kind of *μανία* which Empedocles explicitly condemns in B3.6 (1981 *ad* B23).

[72] Cf. Wright (1981, *ad* B23). According to her interpretation, the fact that Empedocles uses traditional epithets for the Muse further suggests that she functions as a literary device in his poetry. See also, (1997, p. 8, n. 10), and (2006, p. 209) against Trépanier's interpretation in specific. Obbink has argued that if Empedocles refers to himself in this fragment, then his references to the Muse in B3 and B131 would be superfluous (1994, p. 63). *Contra* Wright's view, see Inwood (2001), who translates "the story from a god", and Zafiropoulo (1953), who translates "le discours d' une divinité".

[73] For *Ἀφροδίτη* as a cosmic force in Empedocles which brings together the *ῥιζώματα*, see B22.13: *ἀλλήλοις ἔστερκται ὁμοιωθέντ' Ἀφροδίτηι*; B71.5: *ὅσσα συναρμοσθέντ' Ἀφροδίτηι*; but also B17.32-3. For *Κύπρις*, cf. B73; B75, and the description of her *βασιλίεια* in B128. For Empedocles' use of *Φιλότητα* as synonymous to *Ἀφροδίτη*, cf. B20.5: *Φιλότητι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἕν ἅπαντα*; B21.12: *ἐν Φιλότητι καὶ ἀλλήλοισιι ποθεῖται*; and B26.7: *Φιλότητι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἕνα κόσμον*.

providing his expression with a familiar and graspable form.[74]

There is yet another telling indication for that Empedocles used the traditional language of the epic as an instrument for expressing his thought and not in the way in which a true poet would. In fragment B2.9 he tells us:

πεύσεαι οὐ πλέον ἠὲ βροτείη μῆτις ὄρωρεν

This statement shows that Empedocles accepted a certain limit in human understanding and a specific area within which mortal knowledge could be pursued. The disparity between mortal and divine knowledge was nearly proverbial in Greek culture.[75] However, Empedocles gives it in this fragment a new twist and builds upon the notion about the patronising relationship, which the poet traditionally had with his Muse. He thus refines the implications of this belief and he does not treat it as a banal concept.

In the case of epic poetry and in prophecy, the purpose of divine inspiration is to elevate the inspired individual to a higher level of understanding which was previously unattainable by him in his ordinary status as a mortal. The individual thus manages to supersede the restrictions which his mortal point of view imposes and to acquire in this way a higher form of understanding.[76] Empedocles on the other hand states in fragment

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[74] In fragment B17.24 Empedocles explicitly says that *Ἀφροδίτη* is an *ἐπώνυμον* for *Φιλότης*, while uses it as a synonym in frs. B22.5, B71.4, B73.2, B86, B87. In frs. B95, B98.3, B128.3 he uses *Κύπρις* instead of *Φιλότης*. This suggests that he used the traditional name of Aphrodite, because it immediately evokes the image of combining. In this way Empedocles illustrated the cosmic process with which everything in the world is created. See also the introduction of the four *ῥιζώματα* in B6 with the mythical names of *Ζεύς*, *Ἥρη*, *Αἰδωνεύς*, and *Νῆστις*, which Mansfeld interpreted as a riddle (1995, p. 227).

[75] Cf., e.g., Pind. *Isth*. 5.16: *θνατὰ θνατοῖσι πρέπει*; Soph. fr.531N²: *θνητὰ φρονεῖν χρὴ θνητὴν φύσιν*; and Antiph. fr. 289: *φρόνει εἰ θνητός εἶ, βέλτιστε, θνητὰ καὶ φρόνει*.

[76] According to Bollack, the adjective *βροτείη* does not necessarily imply a restriction in knowing, since it shows that "l' intelligence est presque illimitée, bien que

B2.9 the exact opposite. In his view one should not undertake to investigate matters which are simply beyond the reach of his mortal mind.[77] The unconventional way, that is, in which Empedocles treats the motif of poetic invocation is suggested by the fact knowledge is for him a matter of personal responsibility.[78]

It is also worthy of note that Empedocles never explicitly refers to the value of his poetry as such, and he never mentions other poets in his account. This is to some extent unexpected for an individual who is conscious of his poetic craft, and who whole-heartedly believes in the social importance of his poetry.[79] It then appears that Empedocles did not associate his skill of devising fluent hexameters with his authority claims. The fact that he never competes with the poets, furthermore, may perhaps suggest that for him theoretical cosmologising is acknowledged as *some* distinct area of expertise, the particular characteristics of which are nonetheless unspecified. At any event, Empedocles repeatedly links the aim of his account with the

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mortelle". At the same time, however, human intelligence can never supersede "la puissance divine" (1965, vol. III *ad* B2).

[77] Trépanier maintained that Empedocles with this phrase asks for divine assistance on behalf of his student Pausanias, who has already reached the peak of knowledge but still has to proceed further (2003, p. 55). However, it does seem that Empedocles is here concerned with pointing out to his audience that some things may forever escape the knowledge of men. Burkert on the other hand suggested that Empedocles here means in the "manner of the shaman" (1972, p. 216). In a similar vein, Millerd held that the *βροτείη μῆτις* resembles the claims of the seer (1980, p.25). There is simply not enough evidence in the surviving fragments in support of this view. For an examination of the expertise of the shaman, see in the introduction.

[78] This is suggested by the fact that whenever Empedocles presents a cosmological view he frequently uses the authoritative *I*. Cf. frs., B8.1; B17.1,15,16; B35.1,2; B37; B111.2, and B114.1-2. These fragments show that Empedocles presents a theory which is the product of his personal intellectual effort. This is pointed out by von Fritz and Trépanier, who observe in their examinations that Empedocles for the most part speaks in his own name, although he apparently claims divine inspiration. Cf. (1946, p. 14, n. 103) and (2003, p. 144), respectively. In addition, Hershbell argues that the poem of Empedocles is not entirely a matter of divine revelation (1970b, p. 148).

[79] Cf. also Hershbell (1970b, p. 159). For an example of the way in which a true poet declared his poetic skill to his audience, see Hes. *Th.* 75 ff.

enhancement of the audience's wits and with the understanding of the cosmos.[80]

It is therefore reasonable to assume that Empedocles is not sincere when he employs the motif of poetic inspiration, as in the case of poets or prophets. It is part of the conventional language which he uses in his exposition, mainly because this form of expression is more effective in oral communication. It would be unwise, however, to take this choice of Empedocles as an instance of "empty formalism", as Trépanier has maintained.[81] It is unlikely that Empedocles' audience could perceive an original use of epic style as a formalism. It is safer to assume on the other hand that Empedocles in this way furnishes his otherwise dull cosmological speculation with extra flavour. He does not handle tradition with sterility but with imagination and originality, and for this reason his verses show that conventionality could lead to a finely fruitful kind of expression, when used aptly.

The modern mind perhaps finds it hard to accept the view that conventionality could be treated creatively and that it could function as a subsidiary aspect of originality. However, the circumstances under which these works were communicated were different, and for this reason the audience treated the employment of epic style with a different sensitivity. Empedocles' use of a traditional expression does not therefore on the face of it rule out the possibility that such a choice was devoid of significance in laying

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[80] Cf. B110, but also the phrases: *μάθει γάρ τοι φρένας αὔξει* (B17.14) and *ἀργαλέη ἐπὶ φρένα πίστιος ὁρμή* (B114).

[81] Cf. Trépanier (2003, p. 144). In a similar vein, von Fritz maintained that Empedocles invocation of the Muse cannot be merely a literary device, as the phrases *θεοῦ πάρα* (B23.11) and *βροτείη μῆτις* (B2.9) suggest (1946, p. 14, n. 103). Lloyd observed that the claim to divine inspiration which Empedocles and Parmenides make should not be discounted as a matter of convention (1970, p. 38). Jaeger on the other hand held that in the *Peri Physeos* Empedocles can be easily taken to talk in a rather conventional manner (1967, p. 94).

a claim to a status of authority in society. His use of the highly celebrated medium of the epic hexameter implies to his audience the seriousness of his message, while at the same time it underlines the fact that Empedocles discloses with his account a superior form of knowledge.

ἐν θεῷ γε μὰν τέλος

Pind. *Ol.* 13.104

Chapter VI: Conclusion

1. Contextual authorities

The expertise of the epic poet rested upon his ability to acquire insight through divine communication into past events and to narrate heroic deeds. The oral epic poet was to a considerable extent restricted insofar as he had to use traditional formulae and themes in his composition. His poetry was viewed as the product of divine grace and inspiration. Although poetic inspiration is present in Parmenides and Empedocles, our examination has suggested that they treated the communication with the divine as a literary device, with which they could lay a claim to a higher form of knowledge. In their cosmologies, that is to say, the divine plays no actual role in the acquisition of knowledge, since this knowledge is presented as a personal discovery. They exploited the traditional associations of the motif of divine inspiration to entirely different purposes. The expertise thus of the first cosmologists was not at the service of the gods or of the religious system of beliefs.

In addition, the epic or lyric poets could occasionally discuss the nature of the gods or the origins of the human world, and it is in this respect that the early cosmological enterprise apparently converges with an area of poetic knowledge. However, the poets were not generally concerned with phrasing an epistemological view. It is only fair to exclude Hesiod from this observation, since he was the first to address the question of distinguishing between truth and falsity. Only that Hesiod does not proceed to examine the implications of this distinction in connection with a specific topic. He does not refer to the conditions of safe knowledge, and he talks

about human knowledge in general and not about a reasonable understanding of the cosmos, as in the case of the thinkers under examination.

Poetic cosmologies differ from early cosmological accounts in that they do not pursue an understanding of the cosmos in terms of acquiring an intellectual insight. They offer an explanation of the cosmos which is also characterised by rationality, albeit this rationality is of a different nature. It is the rationality of myth but not of the human mind. In early cosmological explanations the Olympian gods are dismissed from their influence in the cosmic world and from the role which they played according to tradition in the formulation of the world. The conceptualisation through myth was gradually abandoned and thus new forms of reasoning about the cosmos were pursued. The novel idea which Presocratic cosmologies introduced was that they confronted the world as an independent structure, the constitution of which was intelligible but also predictable.

It is also worthy of note that the efficacy of poetic performance partly resulted in an arrival to aesthetic gratification, an aspect which is notably absent from the accounts under examination. This difference is important, because it reveals the shift in the purpose of communication. Our modern standpoint has reduced the importance of the fact that poetry was accompanied by a musical instrument. At the same time it is unwise to ignore that epic poetry had an educational value in Greek society and a status of authority which was hard to question. It was in this respect that early cosmologists wished to distinguish their expertise from the great poets of the epos.

Mantic knowledge had an important practical quality, since it regarded the appropriate action which should be taken in a crisis situation. Like the poet, the diviner and the oracles based their authority claims upon the belief that they were the competent mediators between men and gods. It is perhaps for this reason that these individuals were not at pains to defend extensively the reliability of their expertise or knowledge. It seems that the claim to a divinely inspired message was sufficient.

In addition, prophetic knowledge had an a-temporal quality, which is also attested in the early cosmologies. However, in the case of divination, the seer or the oracle knew many separate and unrelated truths, which applied to the past, present, *or* future. They do not offer a single explanation of a specific structure, and their knowledge is attached to the particular needs of a particular client. The first cosmologists present a single truth, and a cosmic pattern, which never ceases to affect the formulation of the cosmic order. Despite this dissimilarity, however, it is possible to understand the presentation of an a-temporal truth as the intention to emphasise the claim that the knowledge which the individual presents covers the whole field of human consciousness.

The prestige of the seers and of the oracles was based upon the common belief that the gods are prone to communicate their knowledge directly to charismatic individuals. In the case of the seer, furthermore, his personal expertise was a necessary condition, insofar as he had to *interpret* correctly the omens. Divine inspiration does not have the same bearing in the first cosmologies, since they do not rely heavily on external divine sources of knowledge but on personal intelligence and on the ability to perceive and understand the true nature of the cosmos. These individuals often take the personal responsibility for the truth which they disclose. The Presocratics under examination thus managed to disentangle authority claims from such figures, and they disassociated truth from its previously divine origins. In this way they recognised the right of man to pursue knowledge on his own and without the aid of his gods.

The first cosmologies bear one further similarity with the expertise of the seer: they both interpreted observable reality, albeit to different ends. The seer used visual omens in order to predict the will of gods, whereas the first cosmologists used observable reality in order to perceive a plausible explanation of the cosmos and of the way in which the cosmic order is formulated. Observable signs thus lost in the first cosmologists their religious function, which was replaced with a novel notion. In the early cosmologies observable reality is thought to provide the human mind

with a system of cosmic clues, which require interpretation. They were also viewed as indications of a coherent world order. This in turn implies that the mind of the cosmologist regards these signs differently. They are no longer considered the manifestations of divine will but of the inner-structure of the *physis*, i.e. of cosmic reality.

It is also worthy of note that sense data partly have in the first accounts about the cosmos an argumentative function, since immediate experience is highly valued, especially in an oral society, and it cannot be easily challenged. In the case of mantic knowledge on the other hand, visual testimony has no particular argumentative weight in connection with the truth which the seer reveals to his client.

2. Mode of communication: archaic orality

Recent scholarly examination of archaic orality and literacy has shown that although there was a surge of literacy in 5th century Greece, new ideas were publicised mainly through oral performance. However, it is hard to imagine that these cosmologies were performed in the Agora, where the noise would make it difficult for the individual to deliver his intellectually demanding message. It is safer to assume that these cosmologies were read out in front of a small group of persons, most likely the aristocrats.

At any event, it seems that the need to convince a live audience about the reliability and worth of one's personal expertise brought about a competitive spirit. Individuals needed a good reputation, because the transmission of new ideas did not yet occur within a fully literate system of communication, in which it is easier for the text to survive in time regardless of the public attention or approval it has managed to receive. The gradual spread of writing formulated an alternative way of conceptualising and favoured more abstract and extensive forms of reasoning, the circulation of which was not wholly dependent upon the popularity of a particular work. In addition, the oral nature of Presocratic communication offers some

assistance in understanding the reason why the majority of the thinkers under examination opted for the popular medium of verse. It helps us view in new light the authority claims of the early cosmologists, which the use of epic language implies.

In the archaic epoch myth and hexameter verse were by far the most prestigious and familiar types of expression. It seems that the first cosmologists had to forge their message according to the demands of their audience, which was particularly keen on epic expression and myth. The employment of epic language implied the desire to lay a claim to a status of authority, which was as important as that of the epic poets. In addition, the use of this familiar style paved the way for the successful delivery of the otherwise hard cosmological message by facilitating the understanding of the audience. The Presocratics thus used analogies, similes, and examples from everyday life in their accounts, because such elements establish a connection with the common experience of men. They therefore illustrate the content of the cosmological view which is presented and they have an explanatory function in the account. These stylistic features were used as a vehicle for expressing new and original ideas but they do not constitute a central aspect of Presocratic expertise.

This is also suggested by that the only requirement which these thinkers set for the communication of their accounts is the application of personal intelligence. This is less evident in Xenophanes, although in fragment 34 he does phrase the idea that one should be aware of the possibility of error. At any event, the thinkers examined here frequently refer to those who fail to *perceive* the truth which they disclose. All the same, they do not assume a specialised or limited audience of listeners. The content of their message thus addressed everyone provided of course that they were personally interested in the examination of the cosmos. This characteristic, furthermore, is quite distinct from the knowledge which was presented in the closed circle of the mystical cults, which was kept with secrecy within the religious fraternity.

The live presentation of early cosmologies has one further implication. It

suggests that the fragments which have survived are an *aide memoir* for live performance. For this reason they have preserved a single aspect of the way in which Presocratic expertise was presented to the public, but they not account for the discussion which may perhaps have followed. It is possible that the response of the audience to these accounts was immediate, since they could express their agreement or disagreement with the view presented once the author has finished reading out his work, as mentioned in the Platonic dialogues. It is in this stage of performance that a more self-assertive tone and a defence of personal expertise were perhaps expected to take place. The discussion which followed the reading of a work is for us irretrievably lost, although it is generally safe to assume that important elements of authority claims were presented in this stage.

3. The early cosmologists as a distinct group and the different stages of authoritative differentiation

The accounts examined here all claim to investigate the formation and structure of the cosmos.[1] Interestingly enough, however, these thinkers do not acknowledge one another in their works, although they often refer by name to other individuals such as Homer or Hesiod. This in turn makes it difficult to accept that they understood their activity in connection with a specific area of expertise. It is also questionable whether they considered their theorising about the cosmos as a distinct domain of interest. All the same, it is unwise to overlook the fact that they all attempt to answer the same question, and that they all share the same aim insofar as they claim to help their audience to avoid the state of ignorance or of false opinion.

In order to decide whether a work belongs to a specialised area of knowledge and to a specialised group of experts, it is important to take into account three elements, which indicate specialisation. Firstly, it must register a specific topic of investigation, secondly, it must acknowledge a tradition of style, and thirdly, it must

[1] See also Table III in the Appendix.

acknowledge a tradition of method. A group of specialised experts, that is, follows a tradition in terms of the topic it discusses, of the medium it uses in exposition, and of the method it applies. It must display an awareness of common features and conventions in respect to these elements.

In the thinkers examined here only the first element is easily detected in the surviving fragments, since they all apparently claim to investigate the cosmos. However, it appears that they are not aware of a tradition of style or of a systematic method, which they view in connection with their cosmological authority claims. Xenophanes composed verses (elegies *and* hexameters), Heraclitus wrote aphorisms, whereas Parmenides and Empedocles hexameters. It is also remarkable that Parmenides' way of reflecting upon the cosmos was not picked up by Empedocles, although they both used the hexameter verse. Zeno and Melissus on the other hand display some relativity with Parmenides' thought, but they did not follow his choice of verse. It then becomes apparent that the first cosmologists were not aware of any tradition in connection with their cosmological theorising.

In addition, from the thinkers examined here only Parmenides explicitly states a new method in connection with the discovery of knowledge (B2). He applied this method in his account, furthermore, in order to reach safe and plausible conclusions about the qualities of the *ἐόν* (B8). Xenophanes, Heraclitus, and Parmenides frequently remark upon the possibility of knowledge in general, but they do not go as far as to describe the particular features of a specific cosmological method.

It then seems that the early cosmologists did not position their accounts within a framework of a cosmological tradition. Their choice of medium is characterised by an apparent randomness, whereas they fail to establish a coherent methodology for cosmological knowledge. This in turn implies that whilst some of the aforementioned elements which define specialisation are present some others are not. At the same time, it is hard to accept that these individuals were completely detached from specialisation. This problematic feature of their accounts is resolved if

we accept that there is not only one type of specialisation. We need therefore to distinguish different stages of authoritative specialisation based on the presence or absence of these basic elements.

A. Laks has proposed in his examination the terms "differentiation", "specialisation", and "professionalization", which we will borrow for our analysis. It is important to point out that Laks is interested in defining larger fields of competence and not the authority claims of specific individuals, since, according to his interpretation, knowledge is differentiated and not the persons.[2]

In the first stage of authoritative differentiation the individuals are convinced that their knowledge is generally different from other types of available knowledge, which are regarded prestigious in their society. This is the most general and unspecified kind of authoritative awareness. Individuals display the desire to establish (while in fact they fail to do so) a different and untried domain of expertise, but they do not feel the need to define its particular nature or *techne*. They simply register a new are of concern, which should be investigated, but by which standards or on what grounds they do not explicitly say. This preliminary stage of authoritative differentiation is thus characterised by a diversity in terms of both expression and of method. This is so because in this early stage there is no established tradition, which dictates the use of a standard medium of expression, and which clearly and decisively outlines the nature and instruments of this field of competence.

The lack of an established inner tradition makes the individuals of this stage appear as somewhat unrelated figures, since they do not acknowledge in their works other like-minded individuals, and they do not therefore perceive themselves as members of a specific authoritative group. In this stage a straightforward and assertive presentation of personal views is considered sufficient for claiming

[2] Cf. Laks (2002, pp. 15-6). It is important to point out that according to Laks professionalization is the middle stage. This does not contradict the view presented here, since Laks takes interest in a different question in his analysis.

authority, although the individual may occasionally resort to a more reasonable mode of exposition.

The important contribution of the first stage in the overall process of establishing an authoritative enterprise lies in that individuals register, without defining or defending in detail however, an area of authoritative concern. In this stage there is one *major* topic of discussion, which is nonetheless pursued sporadically and in a relatively disorganised fashion. The individual may occasionally express views also on matters other than that of his affirmed main interest.

In the second stage of "specialization" the individual is able to differentiate his expertise from other groups of experts but also from other like-minded individuals who claim the same type of expert knowledge. In this case he differentiates himself however from others on grounds of the untruthfulness of their knowledge, and not because he considers himself to belong to a different group of experts. In this stage inner-differentiation may appear but it is not common, and individual still perform in society generally as units. They are, however, able to perceive themselves in connection with a specific group more confidently and more consciously than the individuals of the first stage, although they are not yet able to completely differentiate themselves from others. The major difference between the stage of "specialisation" and of "differentiation" is that in "specialisation" the individual is concerned *exclusively* with a single area of knowledge, whereas in the preceding stage of "differentiation" he may express views on areas other than that of his primary interest.

In the last stage of "professionalization" personal expertise is consciously and self-assertively differentiated both from other authoritative groups as well as from other fellow experts. In this phase the individual views his work in relation with an already formulated contextual tradition of his discipline, and for this reason he may also discuss and criticise the theories of other like-minded individuals. The individual who represents this stage perceives himself as the active contributor to a

specific group of experts, who all investigate the same question. In the stage of "professionalization", furthermore, the conventions and norms of the authoritative activity are established, especially in terms of the kind of *techne* employed and of the medium of expression used.

In this stage the audience can immediately place the expertise of the individual within a specific tradition, and they can identify his expertise in connection with a specific discipline with which they are familiar. The work is presented to an audience which shares the same specialised interest in the topic which the individual discusses in his account. It does not address simply whoever happens to be present at the gathering, as in the case of the previous stages of authoritative differentiation. The publication of the work thus occurs within an established frame of pursuing expert knowledge.

In the stage of "professionalization" the discipline has institutionalised establishments (such as schools), at which teachers pass on the basic skills and the specialised *techne* of the discipline. The student is free, however, to accept or reject the knowledge and skills which he has received from his teacher. He cannot stray too far from the main principles of his discipline, unless, of course, he wants to reinterpret them in new light and to point to an alternative kind of knowledge, in which case the discipline has to advance again through the same successive stages of authoritative differentiation.

The professionalized individuals are thus learned and "educated". They may respond creatively to the knowledge which they have received and in due time they may agree or disagree with the tradition of their forerunners. At any event, continuity is a basic feature of professionalization, and in this stage it is easy to trace a linear development of theories. These theories are not perceived independently or randomly but in connection with an existing tradition. It is in this stage that critical scrutiny and the refinement of theories are developed, indeed expected and required.

In these stages of authoritative differentiation, personal authority claims are contextual, since they are always made in connection with other types of authority. However, it is only in the last stage of "professionalization" that the individual engages in critical discussion with other fellow authorities (inner differentiation), as in the case of Plato and Aristotle in philosophy. The first stages of "differentiation" and of "specialisation" are relatively close, since there are to a considerable extent equally vague and broad types of authoritative awareness. At the same time however, it seems that in both stages the individual considers himself an expert, although he is not yet able to defend his knowledge or map out a specific domain of expertise, as in the case of the more developed stage of "professionalization". This does not imply that these individuals do not wish to lay any claims to authority. They simply fail to establish and validate these claims due to the largely yet undecided and unspecified nature of their "discipline", which is starting to emerge in society.

It is now possible to interpret the authority claims of the early cosmologists in new light and to explain some the apparently problematic features of the way in which they present themselves to their audience. Their accounts are so difficult to tackle in terms of their authoritative perspective, because they represent different stages of authoritative awareness and differentiation.

Xenophanes clearly presents himself in fragment B2 as someone worthy of public attention. His mention of *εὐνομίη* in this fragment implies that for him his poetry benefits, in an unspecified respect however, society. Xenophanes cannot seem to find the right kind of metre for his poetry, since he composed both elegies as well as hexameters. However, in his elegies he strikes a generally unfamiliar note, whereas his scarce hexameters reveal an interest in theology and occasionally in cosmology.

In addition, although Xenophanes is closer to the culture of poetic inspiration he never uses this motif in his verses. This implies that he wanted to avoid being associated with the poets. He launches an explicit attack on epic poetry and criticises

the anthropomorphic representation of the divine in the epos, which he found unacceptable on rational grounds. In our examination of Xenophanes we have pointed out that although the criticism of epic poetry was not untraditional, the particular way in which Xenophanes objects to the reliability of the epic truth is an original discovery.

In fragment B18 Xenophanes registers the possibility of *human* knowledge, but he does not say in which way or under which conditions it is possible to acquire this knowledge. In fragment B34, furthermore, he distinguishes between *σαφές* and *δόκος*. This distinction shows that he is concerned in his poetry with truth, which he nonetheless understands in connection with questions about the nature of the divine. He also never openly attaches the authoritative status of *σαφές* to his poetry. Xenophanes did not discover a new method, although he was conscious of that one should avoid false belief. At any event, his major contribution was that he managed to disassociate knowledge from its previously divine sources, and that he stressed the importance of personal *ζήτησις*.

The content of his hexameters is characterised by *some* regularity, and it is possible to trace a pattern of the issues which he discusses. He is not aware of any tradition of metre, he does not refer to other like-minded individuals, but he frequently criticises epic poetry for its mistaken view about the divine. He confronts the very basic question of how it is possible to express a new kind of knowledge, which was the product of a critical response to the tradition of epic poetry. Xenophanes shows the way to a new way of thinking about the divine and, hence, of conceptualising. He is more than a religious reformer, because he was the first to criticise the epic tradition in order to replace its minds-set with a more reflective attitude. Xenophanes thus represents the very early stage of "differentiation". He obviously feels uncomfortable with existing types of expertise, but he fails to perceive his own *σοφίη* in a clear and strictly defined manner.

Heraclitus on the other hand oscillates between the stage of "differentiation" and of "specialisation", and for this reason he represents a more advanced stage of

authoritative awareness than Xenophanes. In the opening of his work he immediately introduces his cosmic principle (*λόγος*), which he explicitly associates with human intelligence (*ξύνεσις*). In this way Heraclitus registers the major topic of his account, and he appears to understand his personal expertise (*σοφίη*) as theorising about the cosmos. This is also manifested in his belief that "all is one" and that there is only *one* way of being wise, which imply that knowledge is for Heraclitus the product of a specialised concern.

Heraclitus decided to present his cosmological message with aphorisms and he did not follow Xenophanes' choice of verse. It then seems that for him, as for Xenophanes, cosmology did not yet have an established traditional expression. By choosing prose Heraclitus may have wished to imply to his audience that he examined a specific question in depth, as in the case of other contemporary works of prose such as that of the Ionian historiographers. His sensitivity in the way he handles language, furthermore, and his belief that human language can reflect the cosmic reality perhaps suggests that he tried to invent a unique style for his unique topic. At the same time, however, this implies that he did not view his expertise in connection with any other existing, or emerging, group of specialists.

At any event, what is particularly distinctive about Heraclitus is that he asks his audience to think for themselves. In his fragments he adopts a didactic posture (*διδάσκαλος*), but he never discloses his cosmic knowledge to his audience in full detail. Quite on the contrary, he offers clues about the cosmic reality, which will guide them to his knowledge provided that they use their *νόος* correctly. In fragment B101 the phrase *ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωυτόν* indicates Heraclitus' method, according to which critical reflection helps one discover the true nature (*φύσις*) of the cosmos. However, it is unwise to assume that Heraclitus establishes with fragment B101 a systematic method.

Heraclitus occasionally competes in his fragments against poets and other types of polymaths (amongst whom he classifies Xenophanes), from whom he nonetheless struggles to differentiate his personal knowledge. It then seems that

Heraclitus feels the need to defend the specialty of his expertise, which for him is not *clearly* distinguished from other domains of expert knowledge. Although Heraclitus is to a considerable extent focused on the examination of a single question, the area of his concern is not yet established as a distinct area of concern of a particular group of specialists.

The importance of Heraclitus lies in that he is the first thinker examined here, who explicitly registers a specialised area of concern, and for this reason he advances *towards* the stage of "specialisation". He does not acknowledge a traditional expression for cosmology and he proposes his personal style. Heraclitus displays some awareness of the need for a new method, albeit he does not proceed to establish a systematic methodology. He criticises various types of authoritative individuals and he does not relate his expertise with that of any other like-minded individual. Yet he belongs to stage of "specialisation" because, unlike Xenophanes, he registers a distinct area of concern (i.e. the cosmic *λόγος*), and because he attempts to establish a new method, although he does not outline its particular features.

Parmenides represents in early cosmological speculation the stage of "specialisation", since he deals with a single question, namely the nature and properties of the *ἐόν*. The concept of the *ἐόν*, furthermore, is important because for the first time a thinker replaces the notion of the cosmos with an abstract concept which he examines. It is also noteworthy that Parmenides *implies* that his account is distinct from other accounts, since he is the first who does not refer by name to *any* other experts, unlike Xenophanes and Heraclitus. It then seems that he deals with cosmology as a topic which is immediately recognised by *his* audience, and it is perhaps for this reason that he does not feel the need to defend his choice of discussing the *ἐόν*. In addition, our analysis of his proem has suggested that the real voice of authority belongs to him and not to the goddess. This in turn implies that Parmenides takes the full responsibility for the account which he discloses, and that he is in this way claiming a status of authority in his poem.

Parmenides distinguishes in his poetry between *Ἀληθείη* and *Δόξα*, which in his view constitute the two possible routes of inquiry. From these two routes, however, only the first one can provide reliable knowledge. The crucial element in Parmenides' thought is that he explicitly states his method in fragment B2. If the stage of "specialisation" is established with the presentation of a specialised knowledge and with the demonstration of a specific method, then we find both in Parmenides.

Our examination of Empedocles' fragments has suggested that he composed two poems, because it is otherwise difficult, if not impossible, to explain the shift in the addressee in his fragments. The first poem was obviously focused on investigating the cosmos, while the second poem, the *Katharmoi*, if we accept the title which ancient tradition records, is concerned with questions which we would normally brand religious. The intriguing element in Empedocles is that although he understands the question about the nature of the cosmos as a distinct topic of investigation, his attention is nonetheless not entirely focused on this topic, since he also discusses human morality and appropriate behaviour. And it is in this respect that he differs from the rest of the thinkers examined here.

However, it seems that the starting point for his religious views is his cosmology. This is most lucidly manifested in that the pair *Φιλία- Ἀφροδίτη* has a double function in his poetry. In the cosmological fragments Empedocles understands this pair as the cosmic force which unites the *ῥιζώματα*, whereas in the *Katharmoi* he uses it in order to refer to moral notions. Empedocles thus refines the focus of cosmological speculation, since in the *Katharmoi* he reinterprets the lack of right cosmological understanding as the source of personal misery. This in turn implies that even for Empedocles, who is chronologically the latest thinker examined here, cosmology was still a vaguely mapped out area of expertise, the borders of which were open to other areas of concern. Cosmology was still associated with a rather broad field of competence, which was not yet limited to a particular domain.

Empedocles, like Parmenides and unlike Xenophanes and Heraclitus, does not refer by name to any other rival authoritative individuals, such as the poets. This shows that for him cosmology was not an entirely new and unexplored area of knowledge, since he does not feel the need to justify the choice of his topic. At the same time, however, he does not perceive himself as a member of a specific group of experts, and he does not appear to be aware of any tradition either in terms of expression or in terms of a method. It is also worthy of note that Empedocles' thought combines the empiricism of Heraclitus with Parmenides' austere view of methodology. This is manifested in fragment B84, in which Empedocles uses the example of the torch in order to describe the way in which men see, and in fragment B100, in which Empedocles uses the clepsydra in order to explain his view on aspiration. Empedocles does not therefore belong to the stage of "professionalization" but to the stage of advanced "specialisation", like Parmenides.

The early cosmologists examined here thus represent the first two stages of authoritative awareness, namely either "differentiation" or "specialisation". Their works do not reveal continuity, since their theories do not pursue to explain the cosmos in the same way. They do not apply a standard set of techniques either in the way in which they formulate their message or in the way in which they argue. None of them manages to advance towards the last stage of "professionalization", mainly because their accounts when viewed as a whole do not reveal an awareness of a cosmological tradition. They were not "professionalized" individuals, that is, because they failed to establish a tradition of metre and of method for the cosmological enterprise.

However, this does not mean that these thinkers are less sophisticated than those individuals who come from a professionalized era. Their indecision and the diversity with which they make their authority claims is important, because it offers direct evidence for the transition towards the founding of a new theoretical discipline, such *as* that of philosophy. The four thinkers examined in this analysis are

linear, only in the respect that they all contributed, albeit not in the same way, to the establishment of reflective cosmology.

It is remarkable that each of these thinkers added new elements to the way in which cosmological knowledge could be used as the basis for substantial authority claims. Xenophanes pointed out to the need for a new, and more rational, way of thinking, which he did not associate exclusively with cosmology, however, but with the nature of the divine. Xenophanes was also responsible for making the search for knowledge an entirely human affair. Heraclitus on the other hand was the first to register the discovery of a cosmic principle as the major topic of his discussion but also of his expertise (*σοφίη*), on grounds of which one could convincingly lay a claim to a status of authority in public. He does not simply point out to the need for a new way of thinking like Xenophanes, but he proceeds to propose a whole system of cosmic knowledge. Yet Heraclitus, like Xenophanes, understands cosmological knowledge as the product of personal rational inquiry.

Parmenides and Empedocles take the topic of cosmological investigation for granted and they do not defend it against other areas of expertise. This perhaps allows us to assume that for them cosmology had acquired some prestige in Greek society, and that it was already recognised as a *distinct* activity. For this reason their poems perhaps addressed a more specialised audience of listeners. Parmenides proposed a new systematic method of inquiry, which he also distinguished from a wrong method of inquiry, the details and logical conclusions of which he closely examined in his poem. Empedocles on the other hand introduced the discussion of questions of religion and of proper human behaviour, which he viewed nonetheless in connection with cosmology.

At any event, these early thinkers clearly understood their accounts as the product of a rational activity and as cosmological theorising. They thus provide the missing link in understanding the birth of a theoretical activity which was later branded as "philosophy". And this we are fortunate enough to witness directly in their fragmented words.

APPENDIX: PRESOCRATIC VOCABULARY OF AUTHORITY IN CONTEXT

Table I: Truth and Knowledge

	Truth	Knowledge	
		original	*taught: acquired/ disclosed*
Xenophanes	8.6: ἐτύμως 35.2: ἐοικότα τοῖς ἐτύμοισι 34.2: σαφές	8.6: οἶδα 34.1: ἴδεν 34.3: εἰδώς 34.5: οὐκ εἶδε	10.2: μεμαθήκασι (*καθ' Ὅμηρον*) 18.2: ὑπέδειξαν (*θεοί*)
Heraclitus	1: φράζων ὅκως ἔχει 41: (*ἐπίστασθαι*) γνώμην 112: ἀληθέα (*λέγειν και ποιεῖν*) 133: (*κακοί*) ἀληθινῶν (*ἀντίδικοι*)	17: οὐδὲ (*μαθόντες*) γιγνώσκουσιν 19: (*ἀκοῦσαι*) οὐκ ἐπιστάμενοι (*οὔδ' εἰπεῖν*) 28: γιγνώσκει (*ὁ δοκιμώτατος*) 35: ἵστορας 40: οὐ διδάσκει/ ἐδίδαξε (*πολυμαθίη*) 41: ἐπίστασθαι (*γνώμην*) 55: τὴν γνώσιν (*τῶν φανερῶν)* 57: (*πλεῖστα*) εἰδέναι 86: μὴ γιγνώσκεσθαι (*ἀπιστίη*) 97: μὴ γιγνώσκεσθαι 104: οὐκ εἰδότες 108: (*σοφόν*) γιγνώσκειν 112: (*κατὰ φύσιν*) ἐπαΐοντας 116: γιγνώσκειν (*ἑαυτούς*)	17: μαθόντες 40: πολυμαθίη 55: μάθησις (*ὅσων ὄψις ἀκοή*) 57: διδάσκαλος 93: ἀμαθίη (*κρύπτειν*) 104: διδασκάλωι

Parmenides	1.26: εἰδότα φῶτα 1.52: Ἀληθείης 1.53: (*πίστις*) ἀληθής 2.11: (*Πειθοῦς κέλευθος*) Ἀληθείηι ὀπηδεῖ 8.17: οὐ ἀληθής ἔστι ὁδός 8.18: ἐτύτημον 8.40: ἀληθῆ 8.50: (*νόημα*) ἀμφὶς Ἀληθείης	2.14: οὔτε ἂν γνοίης (*φράσαις*) 6.11: (*βροτοί*) εἰδότες οὐδέν 8.21: ἄπυστος (*ὄλεθρος*) 10.1: εἴσηι	1.51: (*πάντα*) πυθέσθαι (*ἦτορ Ἀληθείης*) 1.54: μαθήσεαι 8.52: μάνθανε (*ἀκούων ἐμῶν ἐπέων*) 10.4: πεύσηι 10.5: εἰδήσεις
Empedocles	114: ἀληθείη (*παρὰ μύθοις*)	4.5: γνῶθι (*πιστώματα Μούσης*) 12.5: (*ἀνήνυστον*) ἄπυστον (*τὸ ἐὸν ἐξαπολέσθαι*) 17.34: (*οὔ τις*) δεδάηκε 23.4: εὖ δεδάωτε 23.13: ἴσθι (*ταῦτα*) 39.5: (*ὀλίγον τοῦ παντός*) ἰδόντων 110.23: ἴσθι	2.17: πεύσεαι 17.23: μάθη (*τοὶ φρένας αὔξει*) 111.5: πεύσηι (*μούνωι σοι*) 112.16: ἐπύθοντο (*κλύειν βάξιν*) 114: οἶδα (*ἀληθείη παρὰ μύθοις*) 129: (*περιώσια*) εἰδώς

Table II: Opinion-Error and common belief

	Opinion –Error	Common belief
Xenophanes	14.1: (*οἱ βροτοί*) δοκέουσι 34.5: δόκος 35.2: ἐοικότα	2.13: νομίζεται 14.1: οἱ βροτοί δοκέουσι 18: θνητοῖς 23: ἐν ἀνθρώποισι 32: καλέουσι 36: θνητοῖσι
Heraclitus	1: *λανθάνει* 17: (*ἑωυτοῖσι*) δοκέουσι 27: δοκέουσι 28: τὰ δοκέοντα	1: τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους (*λανθάνει*) 14: τὰ νομιζόμενα
Parmenides	1.53: (*βροτῶν*) δόξας 1.54: τὰ δοκοῦντα 6.16: πλακτὸν νόον 8.51: δόξας βροτείας 8.52: κόσμον ἀπατηλόν 8.54: πεπλανημένοι εἰσί 8.60: (*διάκοσμον*) ἐοικότα 8.61: (*βροτῶν*) γνώμη 19.1: κατὰ δόξαν	6.16: νενόμισται 8.39: βροτοὶ κατέθεντο 8.53: κατέθεντο 8.55: σήματ᾽ ἔθεντο 9.5: ὀνόμασται 19.3: ὄνομ᾽ ἄνθρωποι κατέθεντο
Empedocles	17.35: οὐκ ἀπατηλόν 23.11: ἀπάτη 133: σκοτόεσσα δόξα (*περὶ θεῶν*)	(*φύσις*) ὀνομάζεται ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν 9.5; 15.2: καλέουσι 17.30: νομίζεται 17.33: καλέοντες

Table III: The cosmic question

Xenophanes	27: ἐκ γαίης πάντα καὶ εἰς γῆν πάντα τελευτᾶι 33: πάντες γὰρ γαίης καὶ ὕδατος ἐκγενόμεθα 34.2: περὶ πάντων (*ἅσσα λέγω*)
Heraclitus	1: γινομένων γὰρ πάντων (*κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε*) 8: πάντα κατ' ἔριν γίνεσθαι 31: ὑπό τοῦ διοικοῦντος λόγου 32: ἕν τὸ σοφὸν 90: πυρὸς ἀνταμοιβὴ τὰ πάντα 41: (*γνώμη ὁτέη*) ἐκυβέρνησε πάντα διὰ πάντων 50: (*ὁμολογεῖν σοφόν ἐστιν*) ἕν πάντα εἶναι 72: λόγωι τῶι τὰ ὅλα διοικοῦντι 80: γιγνόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεών 89: ἕνα καὶ κοινὸν τὸν κόσμον εἶναι (*τοῖς ἐγρηγορόσιν*) 114: ξυνῶι πάντων
Parmenides	1.51: πάντα (*πυθέσθαι*) 1.55: διὰ παντὸς πάντα περῶντα 8.60: τὸν διάκοσμον πάντα φατίζω 12.11: (*δαίμων ἡ*) πάντα κυβερνᾶι
Empedocles	2.14: τὸ δ' ὅλον (*πᾶς εὔχεται εὑρεῖν*) 6.2: τέσσερα ῥιζώματα πάντων 17.17; 20.6: συνερχόμενα εἰς ἕν ἅπαντα (*Φιλότητι*) 26.7: (*Φιλότητι*) συνερχόμενα εἰς ἕνα κόσμον 38.4: (*ἐξ ὧν δῆλ' ἐγένοντο*) τὰ νῦν ἐσορῶμεν ἅπαντα 39.5: ὀλίγον τοῦ παντὸς ἰδόντων

Table IV: Inquiry and methodology

	Inquiry	Methodology
Xenophanes	18.3: ζητοῦντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν	(none)
Heraclitus	18: ἐξευρήσει; ἀνεξερεύνητον; ἄπορον 22: διζήμενοι εὑρίσκουσιν 45: ἐξεύροιο 101: ἐδιζησάμην ἐμωυτόν	101: ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωυτόν (?) 101a: ὀφθαλμοὶ τῶν ὤτων ἀκριβέστεροι μάρτυρες 107: κακοὶ μάρτυρες ἀνθρώποισιν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ὦτα βαρβάρους ψυχὰς ἐχόντων
Parmenides	2.9: ὁδοί διζήσιός (*εἰσι νοῆσαι*) 6.10: ὁδοῦ διζήσιος 7.2: ὁδοῦ διζήσιος (*εἶργε νόημα*) 8.6: διζήσεαι	2.9: ὁδοί διζήσιός (*εἰσι νοῆσαι*)
Empedocles	2.14: (*τὸ δ' ὅλον πᾶς εὔχεται*) εὑρεῖν	(implied in B4.9-13 ff.)

Table V: Indications of oral communication

	Utterer	Audience
Xenophanes	8.6: λέγειν (*ἐτύμως*) 34.4: ἅσσα λέγω 34.4: (*τετελεσμένον*) εἰπών	(none)
Heraclitus	19: εἰπεῖν 73: (*ποιεῖν καὶ*) λέγειν 112: (*ἀληθέα*) λέγειν (*καὶ ποιεῖν*) 114: (*ξὺν νόωι*) λέγοντας	1: ἀκοῦσαι; ἀκούσαντες 19: ἀκοῦσαι 34: ἀκούσαντες 50: ἀκούσαντας (*οὐκ ἐμοῦ ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου*) 101a: τῶν ὤτων (*ἀκριβέστεροι μάρτυρες*) 107: (*ὀφθαλμοί καὶ*) ὦτα 108: (*ὁκόσων λόγους*) ἤκουσα
Parmenides	1.46: ἔπος φάτο (*θεά*) 2.8: ἐγὼν ἐρέω (*κόμισαι δέ σύ μῦθον*) 2.13: τοι φράζω 2.14: (*οὔτε ἄν γνοίης*) οὔτε φράσαις 6.8: τὸ λέγειν (τε νοεῖν) 6.9: φράζεσθαι 7.4: ἐξ ἐμέθεν ῥηθέντα 8.1: μῦθος ὁδοῖο 8.7: φάσθαι; νοεῖν : φατόν; νοητόν 8.35: πεφατισμένον 8.50: (*σοι παύω*) λόγον (*πιστόν*) 8.52: ἐμῶν ἐπέων (*ἀκούων*)	2.8: ἀκούσας (*κόμισαι δέ σύ μῦθον*) 8.52: (*ἐμῶν ἐπέων*) ἀκούων
Empedocles	8.4: ἄλλο τι ἐρέω	3.4: (*ἐφημερίοισιν*) ἀκούειν (*τὴν Μοῦσαν*)

	17.11; 17.25: διπλ’ ἐρέω 17.24: ἔειπα; πιφάσκων; πείρατα μύθων 23.14: μύθων 35.19: κατάλεξα (*ἐξοχετεύων λόγου*) λόγον 38.3: τοι λέξω 114: μύθοις, οὕς ἐξερέω 131.11: ἀγαθόν λόγον ἐμφαίνοντι	6.2: ἄκουε (*τέσσερα ῥιζώματα*) 17.23: κλῦθι μύθων 17.35: ἄκουε λόγου στόλον 23.13: (*θεοῦ πάρα*) μῦθον ἀκούσας 62.6: τῶνδε κλύε 112.16: (*ἐπύθοντο*) κλυεῖν (*εὐηκέα βάξιν*)

Table VI: Σοφία

Xenophanes	2,14: ἡμετέρη σοφίη 2.16: ἀγαθῆς σοφίης (*πόλει χάρμα γένοιτο*)
Heraclitus	32: (*ἕν*) τὸ σοφόν 41: τὸ σοφὸν (*ἐπίστασθαι γνώμην ὁτέη ἐκυβέρνησε πάντα*) 50: (*ὁμολογεῖν*) σοφόν ἔστιν (*ἕν πάντα εἶναι*) 56: σοφώτερος (*Ὅμηρος*) 83: σοφώτατος; σοφίᾳ 108: σοφὸν (*ἐπὶ πάντων κεχωρισμένον*) 112: σοφίη (*ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαΐοντας*) 116: σωφρονεῖν (?) 118: ψυχή σοφωτάτη (*καὶ ἀρίστη*)
Parmenides	(none)
Empedocles	3.13: σοφίης ἐπ’ ἄκροισι θοάζειν 15.1: ἀνὴρ σοφός (*φρεσὶ ταῦτα μαντεύσαιτο*) 129: μάλιστα σοφῶν ἔργων (*ἐπιήρανος*)

Table VII: Intelligence

Xenophanes	23.4: νόημα 24.2: *(οὖλος)* νοεῖ 25.2: νόου φρενί (*πάντα κραδαίνει*)	
Heraclitus	2: ξυνός; φρόνησιν 17: φρονέουσι 40: νόον ἔχειν (*πολυμαθίη οὐ διδάσκει*) 104: νόος ἢ φρήν	112: σωφρονεῖν (*ἀρετή μεγίστη*) 113: τὸ φρονέειν (*ξυνόν ἐστι πᾶσι*) 116: (*ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι μέτεστι*) σωφρονεῖν
Parmenides	1.27: πολύφραστοι (*ἵπποι*) 1.39: ἐπιφραδέως 1.45: (*θεά*) πρόφρων 1.55: δοκίμως 2.9: (*ὁδοὶ διζήσιος*) νοῆσαι 3: νοεῖν= εἶναι 4.1: νόωι (*ἀπεόντα παρεόντα βεβαίως*) 6.8: (*χρή*) τὸ νοεῖν (*τ᾽ ἐὸν ἔμμεναι*) 6.14: (*πλακτόν*) νόον 7.2: (*εἶργε*) νόημα 7.5: κρῖναι λόγωι; ἔλεγχον	8.9: νοεῖν (*φάσθαι*); Νοητόν (*φατόν*) 8.15: κρίσις 8.16: κέκριται 8.16: ἀνόητον; ἀνώνυμος 8.34: νοεῖν; νόημα 8.36: τὸ νοεῖν 8.50: νόημα (ἀμφὶς Ἀληθείης) 16.2: νόος (*ἀνθρώποισι παρίσταται*) 16.3: φρονέει (*φύσις μελέων ἀνθρώποισι*) 16.4: νόημα
Empedocles	2.16: νόωι περιληπτά 2.17: βροτείη μῆτις 3.14: ἄθρει 3.17: πόρος ἐστὶ νοῆσαι 3.18: νόει (*ἦι δῆλον ἕκαστον*) 5: φρενὸς εἴσω στεγάσαι 15.1: φρεσί (*σοφὸς ἀνὴρ μαντεύσαιτο*) 17.23: τοὶ φρένας αὔξει	23.11: (*μή σ᾽ ἀπάτη καινύτω*) φρένα 105.5: (*αἷμα περικάρδιον*) νόημα 108.2: τὸ φρονεῖν 110.23: πάντα φρόνησιν ἔχειν 114: ἐπὶ φρένα (*τέτυκται ὁρμὴ πίστιος*) 129: πραπίδων ἐκτήσατο πλοῦτον; πραπίδεσσιν 132,2: θείων πραπίδων ἐκτήσατο πλοῦτον 133: πειθοῦς ἀμαξιτὸς εἰς φρένα πίπτει

	17.30: τὴν (*Φιλότητα; Ἀφροδίτην*) σὺ νόωι δέρκευ 23.4: μήτιος (εὖ δεδαῶτε)	134: φρὴν ἱερή 136: ἀκήδείησι νόοιο

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